

 WILD   
FLOWERS  
OF  
 THE YEAR   
BY  
A. PRATT

CONTAINING  
FORTY-EIGHT COLOURED PLATES  
OF NINETY-FIVE FLOWERS SELECTED  
AND DESCRIBED IN AN APPENDIX BY  
REV. PROFESSOR GEORGE HENSLOW



24

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YEAR









Traveller's Joy. (*Clematis vitalba*.)



Pasque Flower. (*Anemone Pulsatilla*.)

# WILD FLOWERS OF THE YEAR

BY  
A. PRATT

Containing 48 Coloured Plates of 95 Wild Flowers,  
Selected, Described in an Appendix, and Indexed by  
REV. PROFESSOR GEORGE HENSLOW



*Orchis Morio.*

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1913



## FOREWORD

**I**N giving some account of the Wild Flowers of each month, the author has selected those which are most common, and most likely to be known by name to the general reader. To have enumerated each flower of each month, would have occupied so much space, as to render these few pages no more than a floral dictionary. The writer would regard the work as a little guide-book to the fields, and lanes, and woods ; designed to direct the attention of the lover of country walks, to the lowly flowers, which he may be most likely to find in his path.

“For not to dwell at large, on things remote  
From use, obscure and subtle ; but to know  
That which before us lies, in common life,  
Is the chief wisdom.”

The scientific name of each flower is added, in order to assist any who may wish to study



Botany; while the descriptions of the floral details supplied to the figures of each plant, and fully explained in the *Appendix*, will assist the reader to understand the structures of the flowers and fruits. In every case, whenever possible, these should be examined from *living specimens* and then compared with the illustrations.

Many of the flowers are connected with old times and old customs; or convey some idea of the uses of the plants to which they belong.

A few foreign plants, allied to English species, have been illustrated on the Plates, and are referred to in the Index.

The plates are arranged in the same sequence of the "Natural Orders," or "Families," as in Sir J. D. Hooker's *Student's Flora of the British Islands*.

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# WILD FLOWERS OF THE YEAR

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IN watching the progress of vegetation, as, month by month, it expands before us, we are struck with the regularity with which the flowers and fruits of earth visit us at their appointed times. More than five thousand years since, the promise of God was recorded, that "while the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease,"<sup>1</sup> and every season attests its fulfilment. They who mark most closely the changes of nature, know best how fully and faithfully God has kept His word. As said the inspired psalmist, "Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the lovingkindness of the Lord."<sup>2</sup>

Nature presents to us, even in the history

<sup>1</sup> Gen. viii. 22.

<sup>2</sup> Psa. cvii. 43.

of a simple blossom, some striking marks of God's skill and goodness. The devout Fuller has told us in what way we should look upon the flowers. "A flower," says he, "is the best complexioned grass as a pearl is the best complexioned clay; and daily it weareth God's livery, for He clotheth the grass of the field. Solomon himself is not outbraved therewith, as whose gallantry only was adopted, and on him; theirs innate, and in them. In the morning when it groweth up, it is a lecture of Divine Providence: in the evening, when it is cut down, and withereth, it is a lecture of human mortality."

The argument so often applied to the various works of creation, that an instance of design necessarily implies a designer, is so obvious, that a child can understand it. That there is a God Who created, and hourly regulates this world of ours, with all its changing seasons, its coming flowers, and falling leaves, seems so direct a conclusion, that the more we examine the works of nature, the more entirely we feel the truth of the declaration of the psalmist, that it is the fool who "hath said in his heart, There is no God."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Psa. xiv. 1.



Let us consider only the structure of the very commonest plant in the world, the meadow grass, which trembles at the touch of the butterfly, and bends before the sweeping wind. Destined for every soil and every situation, it is provided with a root composed of numerous slender fibres, so that it can penetrate, not only into the solid ground of the field, but can find its way into the scanty portion of earth at the top of the cliff, in the crevice of the wall, or on the loose sand. Its slight and hollow stem might be snapped by the high winds which pass over the most elevated spot of its growth; but the stem is strengthened by knots, at intervals, and by a coat of flint, which gives to it that solidity, furnished to the animal structure by means of the bone. Instead of receiving injury from the continual cropping of cattle, its leaves increase the faster for being broken; while its parts of fructification, which are to serve for its increase by seed, are carefully protected in a chaffy case, so minutely and beautifully perfect, that its fitness can only be seen by means of a microscope.

Advancing another step in the consideration of nature, we remark how constant the

Almighty is to His original plan, in every subsequent growth of even the simplest flower. How, through all ages, the myrtle has its dark-pointed evergreen leaf, and its sweet odour; and the wood-sorrel, its triple quickly-withering leaf of palest green, and acid flavour. How the almond-tree, which first put forth its bloom to the inhabitants of Palestine, and covered over the branches with its gradually whitening blossoms, so as to serve as a figure for the silver hairs of the aged man, still blooms and grows white, as it grows older, just as it did in the days of Solomon. How, in closely looking at the small cup, or calyx, of a flower—a cup so small that even a drop of dew might fill it—we find that the thread-like ribs with which it is marked, are, in the calyx of one family of plants, ten in number; and in another, only five; and this in all the individual blooms which have come and gone, since Adam first looked out on the flowers of Eden.

The wonderful fertility of plants in the immense number of seeds which they produce, and the plans by which they are scattered, affords another remarkable instance of goodness and skill. Sharon Turner states that “a

common scarlet bean yielded a hundred pods, with five full formed beans in each ; making in such stalks, from three to five hundred from the single bean sown." What is the end of all, these numerous seeds? Why this profusion? Is it that five hundred plants may be produced by each one, and so the earth be over-run with a luxuriant vegetation, that man may find no room for himself and his home? No.

The great Creator has provided the seeds, not only for the reproduction of the plant, but for the food of man and animals, and for the birds ; yea, even for the meanest. "He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry." He, in preparing for their wants knew how many of His creatures should live upon seeds : how the corn should be even the very staff of life ; how the apple, and the cherry, and a thousand other fruits, in which the seeds lie embedded, should refresh his frame, and gratify his appetite : how the silky thistle-down and the black ivy-berry should give food for the birds, and how "the cattle upon a thousand hills" should be nourished by the grass of His fields. He knew that the rains would destroy many seeds ; that many would be blown by the

winds on unkindly soils ; that myriads would lose their germinating powers, by falling on the waters ; and He has thus enriched the plant, that after all that are eaten and that are wasted, there may yet be enough left to sow the earth with fruits to feed us, and flowers to delight us.

How many, as the seeds of the pea, or bean, are inclosed in pods as impervious to rain, as if they were little bags of canvass ; yet drying up as the seeds ripen, and, just at the time when they are fit for sowing, rolling round like a crumpled parchment, and letting their seeds fall out upon the land. See the hard shell of the coco-nut—so hard that, when we wish for the fruit within, we must employ the sharpest and firmest instrument to obtain it ; yet it lies in the ground, and, after a while, the shell opens, and a tender green sprout rises into the air, and grows into a goodly tree ; giving its shadow to the land, and the music of its waving leaves to the ocean. And why has the coco-nut its hard shell, but that, growing as it does near the sea, it may be fitted to swim away to a distant continent ; or to the island of the ocean, or the coral reef, which as yet is unclothed with vegetation ; but, in the progress of years, is to present a green spot in

the waste of waters, where the birds of song shall find shelter, and man shall come to eat the fruits of the land ?

So light is the down that fills the thistle-tuft, that the very faintest summer breeze raises its millions of feathers into the air ; and let a stronger blast arise, and away the numerous seeds of the ash are scattered far and near. Under the bough of the horse-chestnut tree, lies the nut wrapped in its green and prickly covering, till sun and rain have decayed its outer coat, and left it free to find its place in the soil ; and the autumnal damps rot the hard woody cones of the fir-apple, and the seed, so carefully guarded till it is matured, finds its way into the land, and the dark forest of the north rises and thickens with its thousands of trees.

Innumerable are the means which the great Creator employs in spreading fertility ; from the gentle summer wind which ripples the waters, to the storm which lashes the waves into fury ; from the humble and unintentional ministry of the fowl of the air, to the thoughtful plan and the unwearied pursuit of it, which characterizes the works of His great masterpiece—man.†

There are few who are disposed to resist



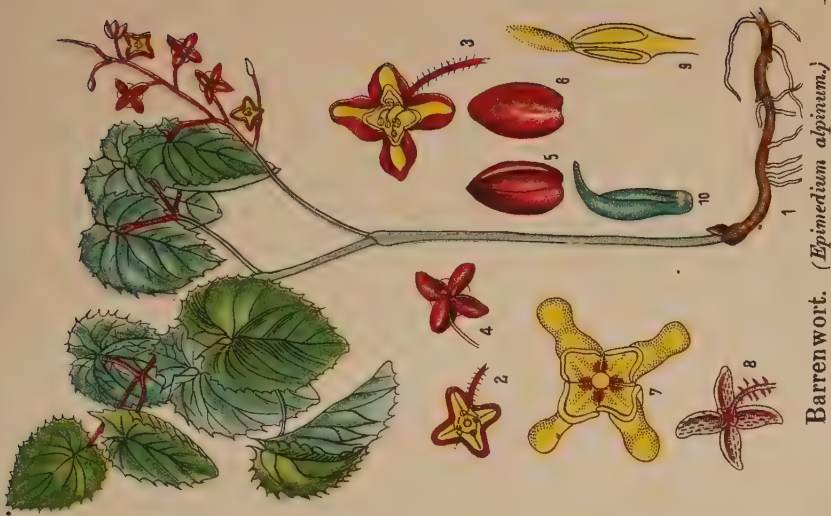
these evidences of a Supreme Being, or to deny His power and beneficence as shown in creation. Though on looking around we see so much practical infidelity ; though many are living and dying, and God is not in all their thoughts ; yet most would acknowledge the fact of His existence, and welcome the proofs of His Omnipotence. Far more general is the notion, that we can learn so much of God in His works, as that we need not study His Holy Word. We may listen to the sweeping winds with solemn awe, and a rapt and subdued feeling may take possession of our souls, and we may fancy it is devotion ; yet not one holy or spiritual emotion may be called into action, which shall enable us to go forth resisting the temptations of sin, or which shall really constitute communion with God. We may look on the broad landscape, smiling in summer beauty, and speak with delight of the " temple of nature," and say with the poet

"The turf shall be my fragrant shrine,"

and follow with reverence the man of science, as he displays God's wisdom in the creation of the universe ; and yet there may be no sense of God's holiness—no true penitence for sin—and no pleading of that Atoning Blood—



Baneberry. (*Actaea spicata*.)



Barrenwort. (*Epimedium alpinum*.)



without which, prayer cannot be acceptable to the Majesty of God.

But though the knowledge of eternal life is not to be gathered from nature, yet we may not only trace God's love in the "flower of the field," but we may be reminded, by rural sights and scenes, of many portions of Scripture truth. Our Saviour Himself bade us look upon this material world for this object.

"And thus," says that pious old writer, George Herbert, "our Saviour made trees and plants to teach the people : for He was the true Householder, who bringeth out of His treasury things new and old : the old things of philosophy, and the new of grace, and maketh one to serve the other. And I conceive," says he, "that our Saviour did this, that, by familiar things, He might make His doctrine slip more easily into the hearts even of the meanest ; and that labouring people, whom He chiefly considered, might have everywhere monuments of His doctrine ; remembering in gardens, His mustard-seed and lilies ; in the fields, His seed-corn and tares ; and so not to be drowned altogether in the works of their vocation, but sometimes lift up the mind to better things in the midst of their pains."

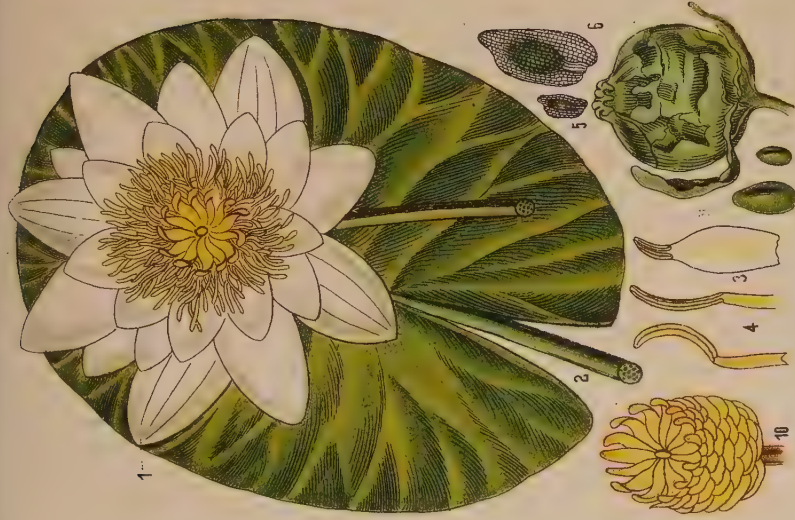
## JANUARY

Flowers in garden—Primrose—Daisy—Winter Furze—Early Grass—Chickweed—Holly—Mistletoe—Old customs

IN the cold and frosty January, where are we to look for the wild flowers? Their roots and seeds are safely covered by the snow, and if a bright clear sky, and a frosty air, should spread their influences, yet few will open to a January sun. Man has, by skill, brought the flowers of other lands to enliven our winter; even at that season when the Almighty “scattereth His hoar-frost like ashes,” and none “can stand before His cold.”

The golden clusters of the winter aconite (*Eranthis hyemalis*) have been brought us from the mountains of Italy, and their buttercup-like blossoms are bright as gold: the Christmas rose (*Helleborus niger*) stands like a flower of snow among its dark shining leaves; neither of these plants have any corolla, the calyx being white





White Water-Lily. (*Nymphaea alba*.)



Corn Poppy. (*Papaver Rhoeas*.)



or coloured does duty for it; while the outermost ring of stamens has the anthers converted into little honey-pots, for the delectation of bees.

Not more than three or four kinds of wild flowers can be found, even as occasional visitants of the English field, at this season. In our southern counties, indeed—in the warm and moist climate of Devonshire, for example—a few flowers, elsewhere considered as belonging to the spring, are in bloom in winter. Thus Carrington speaks of our vernal blossom, as the flower “that cheers Devon’s fields,” and

“In her maternal clime,  
Scarce shuts its eye on Austral suns—and wakes  
And smiles in winter oft—the primrose—hail’d  
By all who live.”

The daisy that “never dies,” is the flower which we are most likely to find on a January day, when the sun has melted the snow from the grass. In the north of England, this blossom is distinguished from the large ox-eye daisy, by the name of dog-daisy; from a notion that a decoction of its juice, if given to young dogs, prevented their growth.

The simple daisy was once a flower of great renown, and was called in England, either herb Margaret or Day's-eye; and it still bears the name of Marguerite, in France. It was the device of the unfortunate Margaret of Anjou, and when that queen was in prosperity, her nobles wore it in wreaths in their hair, or had it embroidered on their robes. That noble-minded woman Margaret of Valois—the friend of Erasmus and of Calvin—she who could retire from the admiration and glitter of courts, to study her Bible and her own heart—she too had the daisy-flower worn in her honour, and was called by her brother Francis I., his “Marguerite of Marguerites.”

The daisy had a great reputation for healing wounds and broken bones in the Middle Age; and was called “bone-wort,” being used in an ointment; also in a drug called “Save,” mentioned by Chaucer.<sup>1</sup>

But leaving the daisy—which, after all, is rather the occasional blossom of the winter mead, than its accustomed ornament—we may wander to the heath-land, to search for the dwarf-furze or gorse (*Ulex nanus*), when this low

<sup>1</sup> *The Knightes Tale*, ll. 1853-56.

and prickly shrub is covered with golden flowers, which defy the winter frost. This species is of much lower growth than the common gorse (*Ulex europæus*). On the latter, indeed, we sometimes espy a bright blossom in winter, and it is described as "the never bloomless furze"; but the peculiarity of the dwarf furze, is, that it exhibits its flowers solely in the autumnal and winter months, beginning to blossom in August, and remaining in full beauty till the end of January. It is very similar to the common species, but not nearly so general. It often grows on high lands, and the Pentland hills are covered with the mountain gorses,

"They whom God preserveth still,  
Set as lights upon a hill:  
A token to the wintry earth, that beauty liveth still."

The grass lands look less beautiful in December and January than in any other months. As soon as February has commenced, the leaves of several spring plants unfold, and trail over the hedge-bank, or shoot among the grass, and the verdure begins to show a gradual increase. But the January grass is almost stationary, and, if we are to believe the old

proverb, it ought not to grow at all during the month.

“If the grass grows in Janiveer  
It grows the worse for it all the year.”

The fact is, that a premature spring is injurious, not only to pasture land, but to vegetation generally.

The common chickweed (*Stellaria media*) is another little blossom which may be found in this early month, when the snow is off the ground. It is too commonly gathered for the tame bird to need any description. Its small white flowers may be seen, on richly cultivated lands, at almost any season. Our song birds, especially the tribe of finches, are much indebted to this plant for food ; as they eat not only its numerous seeds, but its young tops and leaves.

Thus small is January's wreath ! The trees, as yet, are leafless ; but the shining dark buds of the horse-chestnut promise us a speedy foliage. One would wonder where the little birds found shelter, but the sparrow is twitting still, and the robin, though silent during the frost, will have a merry song to greet us on a mild day. The thrush is commencing his tune ; the storm, or missel thrush, sings loudly





The image contains two botanical illustrations of plants, likely from the Ranunculaceae family, showing various parts of the plant and detailed views of the reproductive organs.

**Top Illustration (1-17):**

- 1: A branch of the plant showing the root system, leaves, and a long, slender, ribbed capsule.
- 2: A detailed view of the capsule, showing its ribbed structure and a small, round, yellowish fruit.
- 3: A detailed view of the capsule, showing its ribbed structure and a small, round, yellowish fruit.
- 4: A detailed view of the capsule, showing its ribbed structure and a small, round, yellowish fruit.
- 5: A detailed view of the capsule, showing its ribbed structure and a small, round, yellowish fruit.
- 6: A detailed view of the capsule, showing its ribbed structure and a small, round, yellowish fruit.
- 7: A detailed view of the capsule, showing its ribbed structure and a small, round, yellowish fruit.
- 8: A detailed view of the capsule, showing its ribbed structure and a small, round, yellowish fruit.
- 9: A detailed view of the capsule, showing its ribbed structure and a small, round, yellowish fruit.
- 10: A detailed view of the capsule, showing its ribbed structure and a small, round, yellowish fruit.
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- 13: A detailed view of the capsule, showing its ribbed structure and a small, round, yellowish fruit.
- 14: A detailed view of the capsule, showing its ribbed structure and a small, round, yellowish fruit.
- 15: A detailed view of the capsule, showing its ribbed structure and a small, round, yellowish fruit.
- 16: A detailed view of the capsule, showing its ribbed structure and a small, round, yellowish fruit.
- 17: A detailed view of the capsule, showing its ribbed structure and a small, round, yellowish fruit.

**Bottom Illustration (1-12):**

- 1: A branch of the plant showing the root system, leaves, and a shorter, wider, ribbed capsule.
- 2: A detailed view of the capsule, showing its ribbed structure and a small, round, yellowish fruit.
- 3: A detailed view of the capsule, showing its ribbed structure and a small, round, yellowish fruit.
- 4: A detailed view of the capsule, showing its ribbed structure and a small, round, yellowish fruit.
- 5: A detailed view of the capsule, showing its ribbed structure and a small, round, yellowish fruit.
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- 12: A detailed view of the capsule, showing its ribbed structure and a small, round, yellowish fruit.

White Mustard. (*Brassica alba*.)

from the mistletoe ; the wren unites her voice ; and that sweetest of birds, the lark, is far up in the blue sky, pouring out a strain of melody from a joyful heart.

But we cannot, in noticing the vegetation of January, omit the holly and the mistletoe ; for though their flowers are not now in bloom, yet they are so much more noticeable from their berries than their blossoms, that they seem to belong to the winter. The holly (*Ilex Aquifolium*) intersperses its dark leathery leaves, sharp with spines, among the bare branches of many a hedge-row. Whole forests and woods of this beautiful evergreen, flourish in several parts of our country ; and some fine spots of clustering hollies may be seen in Medwood Park, in Staffordshire. This plant was once called scarlet oak ; and our present word, holly, from Anglo-Saxon Holegn, was called holy-tree ; as by this name it was formerly known, on account of its old use in decking churches at Christmas time. In many parts of England it is very common in the hedges ; and Carrington, among the other plants of Dartmoor, notices

“The holly pointing to the moorland storm,  
Its hardy fearless leaf.”

The flowers of this shrub appear in April. They are white, and look as if cut out of wax. The holly wood, which is very hard and white, is used by turners; and the boxes and screens on which paintings are so often made, are formed of it. In the pretty Tunbridge-ware, which is ingeniously made of various woods, the holly is extensively used. The viscous substance found in the bark, is used for birdlime; and the tough leaves afford food for the caterpillars of one of our loveliest butterflies—the azure blue insect, which is known to naturalists as the *Papilio Argiolus*.

The silvery modest mistletoe (*Viscum album*) cheers the wood, and with the holly adorns our houses. The Druids, probably, first used these plants as the indoor winter ornament; and we dress our houses now, because the custom reminds us of the olden days; and on the same principle

“As the ear

May love the ancient poet's simple rhyme,  
Or feel the secret charm of minster's distant chime.”

We use the mistletoe chiefly at Christmas; but, even a few centuries ago, its branches were carried about from house to house, on the first

day of January, by young men and maidens, as a new year's gift of friendship; and to the present time, the French preserve a relic of this practice. Our forefathers, at a very early period, cherished the mistletoe as a plant which, when gathered with some superstitious rites, would cure disease, avert the influences of the evil eye, and preserve from many dangers; and earlier still, when our country lay in all the darkness and ignorance of Druidical superstition, this plant was revered and almost worshipped, and associated with practices at which humanity shudders, and which, though professedly in honour of God, were as far removed as possible, from the great truth which Christianity teaches, that "God is love."

We cannot now trace exactly the origin of placing the mistletoe-bough in houses and churches. Some authors have thought that an idea prevailed among the ancient Britons, that the sylvan spirits took shelter in it, when the trees of the wood were leafless. Others trace the custom to the fact, that the feast of Saturn was held in December, when the priests compelled the people to celebrate it by bringing

in branches from the woods. The earlier Christians are supposed to have adopted these as signs of joy and gladness ; and as Christmas Day was their festival, they, on this day, decked their houses and churches.







Woad. (*Isatis tinctoria*.)



Sweet Violet. (*Viola odorata*.)

## FEBRUARY

Early leafing trees—Young foliage of herbs—Snowdrop—Red  
Dead nettle—Dandelion—Dandelion Seeds—Groundsel—  
Canadian Flea-bane—Coltsfoot—Marsh Marigold—First  
flower of Sweden

THE chilly month of February, though it seems scarcely propitious to the growth of flowers, yet shows some little token of coming spring, by a small increase in their number. The leaves on the gooseberry bush unfold themselves, and the purple-tinged leaves of the honeysuckle may be seen.

The ancients accounted the mulberry as the wisest of trees, because it never put forth its foliage till winter snows and spring blasts were fairly over; and the oft-nipped young green leaves of the elder tree, in this month, shows that an early leafing tree is subject to a few injuries from the weather. But He who “made everything beautiful in His time,” the God who “made summer and winter,” has given Nature

such abundance, that though a few young shoots may be nipped by frosts, yet the leaves on the main branches are uninjured, and the shoots which the early winds had withered, are not missed in the plentiful canopy of the summer tree.

The banks which border the lanes and roads, are now putting forth the leaves of many flowers of spring. The foliage of the early speedwell is daily growing larger. The deeply-crimsoned stems and young shoots of the herb Robert cranesbill brighten the hedge ; and the five-fingered leaves of the creeping cinquefoil are clothing their long trailing stems. The fragrant leaves of the ground-ivy may be gathered now, and are often collected by country people as a cure for the coughs so common in this month of alternate snow and thaw.

The snow-drop (*Galanthus nivalis*) is the herald of the flowers. It is not, strictly speaking, a wild plant ; but it has, for so many centuries, established itself in many orchards and green lanes, that it is commonly enumerated among British flowers. A lane near Newport, in the Isle of Wight, is so full of its pure white

blossoms, that it is well-known as Snow-drop lane.

The red dead nettle (*Lamium purpureum*) is common on sheltered hedge-banks in February. Its leaves are of a dull green, slightly tinged with purple, and its reddish purple flowers are not beautiful. It is an old remedy for stopping the effusion of blood, and a very good one. This plant is in blossom all the summer, until October, throughout England; though it is little noticed by any but those who, in taking cognizance of the flowers, omit not the humblest. Its foliage has some little similarity to those stinging plants, the true nettles; and this and the other species are termed dead, or blind-nettles, because they have not the venomous powers of their neighbours, the stinging-nettles.

The dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*), "the Sunflower of the Spring," as Elliott calls it, illumines the moors and pastures of the early year, and holds a store of honey for the bee and those other insects which soon will glitter "with wings of sunbeams," across our path. The dandelion root is a medicine used in England, but still more generally in France and

Germany. The leaves are sold in the markets of the former country for salad, and, at Gottingen, the young roots are roasted for coffee. The Scotch call the dandelion, the hawkweed gowan. Every one must have noticed its downy ball of seeds, which are so well adapted for flying in the air, though they need the breeze to scatter them; for if the plant be gathered, and brought into the house, the little shuttlecock-shaped seeds remain firmly fixed in their place. The French term this flower, *Couronne de prêtre*.

The dandelion seeds are eaten by birds: and another plant still more valuable to them, is now blooming. It is the common groundsel (*Senecio vulgaris*); this not only affords food to birds, by its feathered seeds, but they eat also the young foliage: and as few berries, except those of the ivy, are now in perfection, it is of much service. And who that delights in the woodland walks, and listens to the full-hearted song which is poured forth in varied notes, and considers their innocent enjoyment, but must feel glad that a provision is made for the necessities of the birds? What would our spring and summer woods be, if the birds were wanting,





Plate VII.



Heartsease or Wild Pansy. (*Viola tricolor*.)



Waterwort. (*Elatine triandra*.)

and we lacked the spirit-stirring influences of their music and motion? As Hurdis says of the songsters—

“I love to see the little goldfinch pluck  
The groundsel's feather'd seeds, and twit and twit,  
And soon, in bower of apple blossom perch'd,  
Trim his gay suit, and pay us with a song.  
I would not hold him prisoner for the world.”

The groundsel is one of those plants which seem to follow man wherever he sets up his habitation. It was originally a native of some parts only of Europe, and of the southern countries of Asia; but there is, perhaps, hardly a European settlement in the world, in which it does not grow upon the land which the colonist is bringing into culture. Its seeds must be disseminated among the grain, which the European takes with him to the foreign land. Similar circumstances are known to have occurred with some other of our wild flowers.

The Canadian flea-bane (*Erigeron Canadense*) was planted, about a century since, in the gardens of Paris, having been brought thither from its native Canada. Its seeds have now not only crossed the channel, to deck our wild landscape, but have spread themselves

over France, Germany, Holland and Italy, and brought forth their flowers in the Isle of Sicily. So common is the flea-bane during the autumnal months, in the southern counties of our native land, that botanists class it among our wild flowers.

Our common groundsel has a remarkable power of softening water, if it is poured, while boiling, on the plant; and this fluid forms a pleasant wash for the skin, irritated by the winter wind.

The groundsel is one of the largest tribes of flowers which is known throughout the world. No less than five hundred and ninety-six species having received each a distinct name from the botanist. There are nine British kinds, and many hundreds are cultivated in the gardens of this country.

By the latter end of February, the road side, and the neglected field, are gay with the bright yellow rays of the coltsfoot (*Tussilago Farfara*). It is almost the only instance of a wild flower which appears long before its leaves are unfolded. This plant is a certain indication of a clayey soil, and its large angular leaves sometimes abound on the moist clay grounds in the middle

of summer. Loudon says of this plant, that "it covers the clay soils on the pestilential Maremmas, in Tuscany, where scarcely any other plant will grow; and the traveller on these desolate scenes, must rejoice even at this sign of vegetation. We can, indeed, hardly find a spot of earth on which some plant peculiar to the soil will not take root."

The coltsfoot is, in some country places, called bull's-foot, or horse-foot. The cottony down, under the leaves, is often gathered in villages for tinder; and the feather of the seeds, which is of a more woolly texture than that of the dandelion, is used by the Highlanders for stuffing mattresses. The coltsfoot leaves, previously dried in the sun, will, if dipped in a solution of saltpetre, burn like linen rag. The flowers are infused as a remedy for coughs, and were smoked through a reed by the ancient Greeks, as a cure for asthma. The leaves are, in modern times, the chief ingredient of the British herb tobacco, and are often smoked by country people.

By the cold river-side may be found the flowers of the marsh marigold (*Caltha palustris*); its sturdy stem unbroken by the winds, which

make wild music on the harp of reeds, fringing the edge of the water. Unless the weather be unusually fine, we must not expect it to blow before the end of the month, but by that time it is very common on marshy grounds. It is often the flower which enlivens the mountain streams of Scotland in the early year, and is very common in France, where it is called *souci d'eau*. It is well known in villages as the water-blob and water-boat. In Lapland and Sweden, whole plains are yellow with it, and its opening is eagerly watched, as it is the first flower which blooms wild in the northern fields, from which the snows are scared by the spring; though it is not till May that it expands there. Few flowers are more abundant on the marshy lands of Holland, than this. It is not a good plant for the pasture, as the cattle reject this and the other species of *ranunculus*, except when herbage is so scarce that they have little choice. The blossoms of the marsh marigold, when boiled in alum, give a good dye to paper.





Plate VIII.



Carthusian Pink. (*Dianthus Carthusianorum*.)



Soapwort. (*Saponaria officinalis*.)

## MARCH

March weather — Almond tree — Lombardy Poplar — Ash—  
Mezereon—Poisonous berries—Use of plants in France—  
Spurge Laurel — Celandine—Whitlow grass—Shepherd's  
Purse—Gloryless—Flowers of woods—Violet—Anemone—  
Daffodil—Poet's Narcissus—Narcissus in Holland—Arum  
—Cranesbill—Palm Willow—Hazel—Alder

THE old proverb that "March comes in like a lion, and goes out like a lamb," though belonging particularly to the month under the old style, is yet generally true. There is scarcely any time of the year, in which a few weeks effect a greater change in the appearance of nature, and the state of the atmosphere, than at this time; when, both in morn and eve, "the still increasing day" grows on the darkness, at the command of Him who causeth "the dayspring to know his place; that it might take hold of the ends of the earth."<sup>1</sup>

The vegetation of this month is not only

<sup>1</sup> Job xxxviii. 12, 13.

rapidly assuming the brighter colours of spring, but daily becomes less thin and scattered. The winding sprays of the honeysuckle are pretty well covered; the spiry branches of the Lombardy poplar look quite green, and the flowers of the ash are coming out on its leafless boughs. The well-cased foliage which has been hid in the resinous buds of the horse-chestnut tree, bursts out from its winter shield, and the green flowers of the gooseberry invite the bee to their nectar. The blossoms of the apricot tree slowly unfold on the garden wall, and that beautiful plant, the almond tree, is putting forth its delicate blushing flowers so quickly, and so much in advance of all the other trees in the garden, as to remind us of the haste and vigilance of which it was an ancient symbol. "What seest thou?" said the Word of the Lord to the prophet Jeremiah, and he said, "I see a rod of an almond tree." Then said the Lord, "Thou hast well seen: for I will hasten my Word and will perform It."<sup>1</sup>

The redbreast and the blackbird already sing their welcome to the spring; and foremost among the flowers are the bright blossoms of

<sup>1</sup> Jer. i. 11, 12.

the mezereon (*Daphne Mezereum*). Long before the rough winds have subsided, its odours greet our sense, and its beauty adorns our gardens. It is also a wild flower, and grows in many woods of Oxfordshire, Berkshire, Hampshire, and other counties; although it was introduced from Sweden, into the English garden, many years before a better acquaintance with our native botany had led to the knowledge that it belonged to England's Flora. Its purple clusters are out before the leaves appear, which Cowper has noticed.

“Mezereon too,  
Though leafless, well attired, and thick beset  
With blushing leaves investing every spray.”

The mezereon grows in woods throughout Europe; from the forests of the cold Lapland, where it looks gay among the dark firs and the stunted birch trees, to the richly-decked groves of the bright islands of the Mediterranean sea; and in some islands of the Levant, it is so plentiful, that a silver-leaved variety is commonly used for brooms, and called broom plant (*Herbe aux balais*).

Almost every part of the mezereon is acrid. Its one-seeded berries are highly poisonous.

Dr. Thornton records the case of his young sister, who died in consequence of eating but a small number of these bright fruits. Yet, poisonous as they are to man and animals, in general, the Great Creator has adapted them to the use of some of His creatures, for to the birds they are palatable and nourishing; and the thrush and the blackbird search for them eagerly, and haunt the neighbouring trees and hedges where these bushes abound.

A small piece of the mezereon bark, bound down upon the skin with a plantain leaf above it, is used in villages to raise a blister. In France, the use of plants, in their simple forms, is much more common than with us; and the physician directs his patient to gather his remedy from the wood or field; and the herbalist collects a quantity of plants, which are hung, dried on strings, and sold in the shops of Paris. There we may find the mezereon bark, for the blister; and the mullein, the melilot, the mallow, and fifty others, ready for medicinal or surgical purposes. Both in France and England, the mezereon-root is used for toothache, and a yellow dye has been obtained from its branches.







Corn-Cockle. (*Githago segetum*.)



St. John's Wort. (*Hypericum perforatum*.)

This plant, and the several kinds of *Daphne*, are often termed laurel, from the similarity of the leaves of some species to those of the shining laurel tree. Our old names for the mezereon, are olive spurge and mountain pepper, and the French call it *laureole gentille*. In Italy, it is a favourite flower, and called *Biondella* (Little fair one).

Our other wild *Daphne* is much more general than the mezereon in our woods, and, like the former plant, blooms very early in the year. This plant, the spurge laurel (*Daphne Laureola*), is about three feet high, and having circular rows of leaves around its stem, its mode of growth somewhat resembles that of a palm-tree. It has pale yellowish drooping flowers, which hang in clusters under its dark glossy leaves. Like the mezereon, it has an acrid property, and its bluish black berries are poisonous. It is also an evergreen, and looks as bright in the winter wood, as when summer's sun shines upon it.

The lesser celandine (*Ranunculus Ficaria*) is showing its golden glossy stars by the middle of this month. A large number of flowers spring from one root, and its heart-shaped leaves

are spotted with a whitish green colour. Very beautiful it is, but very injurious to most lands. Linnæus thought that agriculturists should endeavour to extirpate this pretty flower, as he considered that it injured all the plants growing near it. Its blossoms shut up before rain, and, even in fine weather, are late in unclosing, for they never look out upon the sun before nine o'clock; and by five in the evening they are folded up for the night. The roots are highly valued as a medicine in Cochin China; but they are very bitter and acrid, and must require caution.

On old walls, and on pastures where the soil is of a rocky nature, may now be found the small white blossoms of the common whitlow grass (*Draba verna*). Its little flowers are cross-shaped, its stem about two inches high, with a small circle of slender leaves around its base. Each individual plant is so very small that flower and foliage might all be hidden by a shilling piece, but it grows in patches, and is therefore conspicuous above the low green moss, which so often protects its roots. The old writers on herbs commended it as a cure for whitlows, and it was also called nailwort. The Swede is interested in observing this plant, for

he waits for its appearance to sow his barley, as he judges that, when its flower opens, the spring is sufficiently advanced to favour the germination of his seeds.

A small flower which blooms throughout the summer, begins to blossom in March. Perhaps few but botanists would call it a flower; most persons would speak of it as a weed, yet like all the works of Him Who made it, its structure is beautiful when seen through a magnifying power. It is familiarly known by the name of shepherd's purse (*Capsella Bursa-Pastoris*), on account of the little heart-shaped seed-vessels, which are closely set upon its stem, and somewhat resembles the old-fashioned purses. It may easily be known by these pouches, and is also commonly called pick-purse. Insignificant as the plant seems, it appears to have attracted some notice in the olden times, for it was called shepherd's scrip, case weed, St. James's wort; and its name of "poor man's pharmacetic," would suggest the idea that it was deemed of some value in the healing art. *Fleur de St. Jacques* is also its old name in France, and it was, doubtless, dedicated to some patron saint, in the days when men sought the intercession of

some departed man, like themselves, of a sinful nature, but renowned for deeds of piety, instead of seeking God, in the only appointed way which He has Himself revealed.

A small green flower, the gloryless, or moschatel (*Adoxa Moschatellina*), may be gathered now in the wood, or on the shady hedge-bank. The stem has four or five flowers at its summit, and the leaves, two or three in number, are on very long stalks. It is not particularly pretty, but is remarkable for its musk-like scent, which, however, is little perceptible during the day, though strong when the plant is wet with the pearls of morn and evening dew.

The woods, so beautiful in the coming month, begin to show here and there a woodland flower, which peeps above the withered leaves and green wintry mosses. The primrose (*Primula vulgaris*) is to us what the Italians call the daisy, flower of spring. The violet, too (*Viola odorata*), that long noted favourite of the poet, half hidden among its broad green leaves, betrays itself, by its sweet odour, to the rambler in the woods. The old naturalist Pliny had so high an opinion of the virtues of this flower, as to state, that a garland of violets, worn about



the head, prevented headache or dizziness. Modern writers hold a far different opinion ; for it is a well-known fact that a great number of violets, in a small apartment, have, in several instances, caused convulsions. The leaves of the violet are frequently applied to bruises ; and the flower was so highly esteemed as a remedy for weak lungs, that a conserve, called violet sugar, or violet plate, was, in the time of Charles II., sold by apothecaries, and continually recommended by physicians, to their consumptive patients. A decoction of the heartsease, which is a species of violet, is still much used as a medicine on the continent. The violet imparts its colour also to liquids, and vinegar derives not only a brilliant tint, but a sweet odour, from having violets steeped in it. It is, however, from its beauty and scent as a wild flower, that the violet will ever derive its chief attraction. It has been said, that "the wise read nature as the manuscript of Heaven," and we may trace a legible handwriting of the Great Creator, even in the lowliest blossom that the Divine Hand has streaked and pencilled.

"The coy anemone that ne'er uncloses  
Her leaves until they're blown on by the wind,"

is now coming into blossom. The wood anemone (*Anemone nemorosa*) is generally common in England, yet unknown in many parts of Essex, and some other counties. The old name of wind-flower is still retained in France, where it is called *l'herbe au vent*; and its English name is taken from *anemos*, which the ancients gave it, because its delicate flowers quivered in the fierce breezes of March, and its shining seeds were carried about on the air. It is still more abundant in the April woods than now; and though frail when gathered, and dying quickly, yet it continues in bloom during a longer period than many other flowers. The blossom of the wood anemone is white and star-shaped, and its stem has about its middle three dark smooth green leaves, of a very beautiful form, with the veins tinged with crimson. This flower is poisonous to cattle, and, if bruised, will raise a blister on the skin.

The daffodil (*Narcissus Pseudo-narcissus*) blooms in March, not only in gardens, but also in a few moist woods, and in meadows watered by streams. This flower, though admired by us chiefly for its early appearance, was a great favourite with the old poets; and it was one of



Mountain Geranium. (*Geranium pyrenaicum*.)



Procumbent Oxalis. (*Oxalis corniculata*.)



the flowers, called by Spenser, Michael Drayton, and other early writers, by the name of "lily." The poets' narcissus, also (*Narcissus poeticus*), grows wild in some sandy fields of England, especially in Kent and Norfolk, but does not flower till May. Its colour is pure white; in former days it was called "primrose peerless." It is the flower so celebrated by the ancient Greek writers.

The scent of both these, as well as of every other species of narcissus, is strong and deleterious. In Holland, where this flower, as well as many others, receives a great degree of attention, some of the more delicate species of the narcissus tribe are cultivated in rooms, and the odour from these rooms is a frequent cause of sickness. This scent is probably more powerful in the damp air of that country, than it would be in our land; a fact of which we may form a good idea, by observing how strong are the odours from the field, or wood, just refreshed by a heavy shower, and which float upon the damp air then evaporating from the surface of the earth.

But the daffodil is a rare wild flower, compared with one which we now find in bloom

under hedges and in woods. The common arum (*Arum maculatum*)—better known by its familiar names of lords and ladies, wake robin, or cuckoo-pint—has large, broad, glossy leaves, often marked with black spots. From the centre of these leaves rises a kind of column, sometimes of a green, or often of a rich violet colour. On this is the blossom, and on this cluster, the bright orange berries which in winter make so conspicuous an appearance, and which, though highly poisonous, are relished by birds. The root of this plant is about the size of a nutmeg, and contains a farinaceous powder, which has been applied to a variety of purposes.

In former times, when not only ladies but gentlemen also, were attired in ruffs, so starched and stiff, that on looking at their portraits we wonder how they contrived to bow their heads, a thick starch was much valued; and clear-starching was regarded as an elegant feminine accomplishment, in which gentlewomen liked to excel, and for the teaching of which they often paid a great price. The starch found in the arum root, was, in those days, highly prized as an excellent stiffener of linen, but the use of it



so irritated and chapped the hands, that the less glutinous root of the wild hyacinth was preferred, when it could be obtained.

The root of the arum, while in the fresh state, is highly acrid, though a favourite food of the thrush; but drying, or any application of heat, dissipates its acrimonious quality, and it is then good for food. In Portland island, where the plant grows in great abundance, the dried roots are much eaten by the peasantry; and both there, and at Weymouth, the powder or flour, derived from them, is sold; but as it is only starch, it is not so good as wheat flour. This powder is also sent to London, and sold by the London chemists under the name of Portland Sago: in times of famine, it has been very extensively used, instead of flour, by the poor, throughout England. The fresh root is taken as a medicine, both in this country and in France; and the renowned cosmetic, known by the name of cypress powder, is made from the arum root.

The cranesbills, of which we have seventeen kinds among our wild flowers, succeed each other as the summer advances. The earliest blossoming species is very common now, and

may be found until autumn. It is the dove's foot cranesbill (*Geranium molle*). It has a small upright bell-shaped flower, of a deep rose-colour, and round leaves; which, as well as its stems, are so covered with soft hairs, that it is like velvet to the touch. The French also term it, *pied de pigeon*.

And now, as an old poet sings, the "palms put forth their braverie," and the early willows are covered with their grey, or yellow catkins, around which, on a bright day, the bees hum perpetually. The willow commonly called palm, is the great Sallow or Goat willow (*Salix Caprea*), and its golden balls are a beautiful ornament to the woodland scenery. They are called by country children yellow goslings; and the old custom of decking the houses with the willow branch, in the week succeeding Palm Sunday, is still retained in villages. It is often, also, carried about at this season of the year, as a representation of the palm branches, which the children strewed in the way when our Saviour entered Jerusalem. It is not easy to guess why this tree should have been selected to represent the oriental palm, as it is altogether unlike it. If we except the weeping willow (*Salix*

*Babylonica*)—which, though common in this country, is not indigenous—there is little beauty in the willows generally; but they are very useful trees to the tanner and basket-maker, and are valuable for poles and fences.

The hazel (*Corylus Avellana*) is now decked with its hanging tassels, and the wind, as it rushes on, in playful gusts, through the woods, stirring up the streams, waves also the boughs of the alder, which are becoming covered with their dark gloomy foliage. The alder (*Alnus glutinosa*) is a sombre tree. Its leaves are singularly glutinous; so much so that, if placed between the teeth, one might fancy, on biting them, that a coating of India-rubber lay between their two surfaces.

## APRIL

Blackthorn—Germander Speedwell—Ivy-leaved Speedwell—  
Wall Speedwell—Grey-field Speedwell—Common Speedwell  
—Lamb's Lettuce—Salad herbs—Ground Ivy—Fumitory  
—Robert-leaved Cranesbill—Beauty of meadows—Meadow  
Clover—Dutch Clover—Shamrock—Valley of Sharon—  
Yellow Trefoil—Hop Trefoil—Starry-headed Trefoil—  
Hare's-foot Trefoil—Strawberry-headed Trefoil—Cowslip—  
Oxlip—Love of Nightingale for Cowslip—Cuckoo flower—  
Autumnal Gentian—Field Gentian—Heartsease—Scorpion  
Grass—Butter-bur—Hyacinth—Oriental Hyacinth—Starch  
Hyacinth—Squill—Green Hellebore—Stinking Hellebore  
—Guelder Rose—Box—Pasque Flower—Wood Sorrel—  
Yellow wood Sorrel—Field Dock Sorrel—Sheep's Sorrel—  
Sweet Wallflower—White Bryony—Sea-side Pea—Former  
times of famine

THE “showers that water the earth,” alternating with the sunshine and soft airs, render this a month of spring flowers. Primroses, anemones, and violets are spread like a gay variegated carpet over the woods, and the scentless dog violet (*Viola canina*), with larger blossoms than the darker tinted sweet violet, blooms in great profusion. Its flowers do not, like those of our old emblem of modesty, hide



Common Flax. (*Linum usitatissimum*.)



Spindle-tree. (*Euonymus europaeus*.)





among the leaves, but flaunt gaily on their longer stalks before the breeze.

And now God "quieteth the earth by the south wind,"<sup>1</sup> and all nature looks calmly beautiful. The swallow knoweth the time of his coming, and the voice of the dove is heard in the wood. The hedges are white with the blossoms of the early sloe, or blackthorn, (*Prunus communis*). Its dark brown branches are thick with the snowy wreath, long before the leaves appear, and, as the spring advances, the leaves take the place of flowers. The white blossoms are very beautiful, and very common in the English coppice. The little harsh fruit, in flavour something like the unripe damson, is relished, perhaps, by none but the school-boy; it is, however, often gathered into jars and bottles, and after lying buried underground till winter, makes a very tolerable preserve. The sloe is much used in the adulteration of port wine, and the leaves are said to be sometimes mingled with the tea-leaf, and sold as Chinese tea. An infusion of the flowers, made by pouring boiling water on them, is a common village medicine.

<sup>1</sup> Job xxxvii. 17.

But leaving the woodland boughs, with their half unfolded beauty, we may pass on to the green lanes where many flowers already grace the hedge-bank. Foremost of these, as most common and conspicuous, are the bright blue flowers of the germander speedwell (*Veronica Chamædrys*), sometimes called eyebright and cat's-eye. Ebenezer Elliott calls it by the former name.

“Blue eyebright! loveliest flower of all that grow  
In flower-loved England! Flower whose hedge-side gaze  
Is like an infant's! What heart does not know  
Thee, cluster'd smiler of the bank, where plays  
The sunbeam on the emerald snake, and strays  
The dazzling rill, companion of the road.”

The old English names of this flower, were “Paul's betony,” and “fluellin:” but, in former times, all the species of speedwell were so highly admired by the Dutch for their real, or supposed virtues, that they called them “honour and praise.” The germander is of a most brilliant blue; so bright that it cannot fail to attract the notice of those who, in early spring, walk in the country; and its notched leaves, in shape not unlike the leaves of a rose, but growing opposite to each other on the stem, sufficiently mark the species. We have in our fields, woods

and hedges, thirteen species of them, but only three other kinds are to be found now in bloom. The ivy-leaved speedwell (*Veronica hederifolia*), which has thick green leaves, shaped like the ivy-leaf, is now a very common weed in gardens, and runs profusely over some corn-fields among the early blade ; its long slender stems entangling in each other, or in those of the plants near it. Its flower is very small, but most brightly blue, and the seed-vessel which succeeds the blossom, is formed of two lobes. Similar in colour is the blossom of the speedwell now to be found commonly on walls (*Veronica arvensis*), but the whole appearance of the plant is different as it grows upright ; and the procumbent speedwell (*Veronica agrestis*) has a small blossom not quite so bright as those of the other species, while its notched leaves and stems lie along the cultured field, or cover over the waste bank. All these are smaller than the germander speedwell, and they all bloom from spring to autumn.

As summer progresses, the remaining speedwells come into blossom. One species, the common speedwell (*Veronica officinalis*), is in flower in May, and is very frequent in dry

woods and pastures. It grows upright, and has a pale blue spike of flowers. The leaves are bitter and astringent, and are often made into tea, especially on the continent. Indeed the French call this flower, *Thé de l'Europe*. An old Danish writer once contended very warmly, that this plant was the identical tea of China; and before the Chinese tea had acquired a settled reputation for its superior flavour and stimulating qualities, this, as well as several other plants, were recommended by herbalists as a more safe and pleasant beverage. The Swedish and German writers of the present day, have a very high opinion of the speedwell tea.

A small flower, the lamb's lettuce (*Valerianella olitoria*), is now very abundant on banks and in corn-fields, especially on a light soil. As this flower blooms when flowers are few, it is more likely to be observed than if a blossom of the summer. It has very thick compact clusters of tiny lilac flowers, its stem is about half a foot high, and the branches spread out over a good space of ground. The leaves are of a pale green, and they are considered by many people to have, if eaten when young, the

flavour of lettuce. The plant was formerly cultivated for salad, and is still called by the French, monk's salad (*salade de chanoine*). Its English name suggests the idea of its growing at the season when those beautiful spring animals, lambs, are seeking their food on the mead. Our forefathers called it white potherb; and Gerarde, the old botanist of Queen Elizabeth's time, says of it, "In winter and the first months of spring, it serves for a *salade herbe*, and is with pleasure eaten with vinegar, salt and oile, as other *salades* be, among which it is none of the worst."

One would scarcely suppose that a plant so insignificant, as to be overlooked by many who must often pass it, could have been at all important as food; but vegetables, either for cooking, or salad, were, in those days, little cultivated in our country, and brought to so little perfection, that the lamb's lettuce would be a less contemptible dish then than now.

The fragrant leaves of the ground-ivy (*Glechoma hederacea*) are winding now on their long stems by every wayside, and, if bruised, diffusing their sweet odour, while their whorls of purplish lilac flowers are daily becoming more

abundant. This is another plant which was more highly valued some centuries since, than in modern days, though it is still used in making a tea for the cure of coughs. The "herbe women of Cheapside," who, in Queen Elizabeth's time, were very numerous on that spot, walking up and down the street with their baskets of "simples" on their heads, had, at all seasons, either the newly-gathered, or dried, ground-ivy, and regularly cried it for sale about this and other streets of London. They called it by the now almost-forgotten names of ale-hoof, tun-hoof, cat's-hoof, hay-maids, and gill-by-the-ground; and the latter name is still used for it in some counties. Ray mentions several cures wrought by the ground-ivy, and warmly recommends its use.

One can now hardly walk into the corn-field, without finding the spray of fumitory (*Fumaria officinalis*). The flower is of a deep purplish rose-colour, with a small black spot upon it, and a number of these small tubular blossoms grow on the upper portion of the stem, forming a spike of flowers about an inch long. The leaves are divided into slender segments, and are so like those of the bright yellow garden





Alpine Buckthorn. (*Rhamnus alpina*.)



Bean-bush. (*Cytisus capitatus*.)



escholtzia, that the gardener scarcely distinguishes the young leaves of the weed from those of the flower. They are of a pale sea-green colour. In summer the neglected cornfield is often quite red with the blossoms of this plant. This plant retains all its properties when dried. It has a very strong saline flavour, and is particularly wholesome for cattle. It is called in the northern counties earth-smoke.

The dark red stems and leaves of the herb Robert Geranium or cranesbill (*Geranium Robertianum*), are gay with its pretty pink flowers, which mingle on the hedge-bank with the blue germander speedwell. The cranesbills received their name from the Greeks, because the seed-vessel is long and pointed like the bill of a crane. The different species are now becoming numerous; and a less conspicuous kind than the Robert-leaved, is quite as common as that flower. It has round deeply jagged leaves, and its blossom is a small pink bell. This is the *Geranium dissectum*. One of the cranesbills, found wild in North America (*Geranium maculatum*), has so astringent a root, that it is called alum-root, and used in that country

instead of that mineral, to fix the dye at the manufactory.

Every day now adds to the charms of the meadow land. "Blessed be the Lord for the beauty of summer and spring, for the air, the water, the verdure, and the songs of birds!" This was the exclamation of Linnæus; and who, in looking on the April mead, is not ready to respond, Blessed be God for the green earth?

Every one knows the pretty and sweet-scented meadow clover (*Trifolium pratense*), and most of us have gathered it from the summer meadow, or the purple field, on which it is sown, and sucked the honey from its petals, while hundreds of bees were humming over the clover-field, intent on sucking it too.

The farmer has not, on his land, a more valuable herbage plant than this and the white Dutch clover (*Trifolium repens*). He has commonly two crops of it, the one in spring and the other in autumn. The name of trefoil has been given to it for its triple leaflets, and the French term it *trèfle*. The plant was called "cloëfer-wort" by the Saxons, from *cloëfer*, to cleave—probably on account of its divided

leaves. The Dutch term it "klafer;" and in our country it was, of old, called "cock's head" and "honeysuckle."

The white Dutch clover is no less common than the purple species; and it is interesting as being most commonly considered to be the shamrock, the national emblem of the Irish; though some writers consider that to be the leaf of the wood-sorrel.

In the beautiful valley of Sharon, so renowned in Holy Scripture, Monro found the Dutch clover to be most abundant, covering the grassy plain with its white blossoms, and there, as with us, inviting swarms of bees to gather over it.

Besides the white and purple clovers, we have several other species of trefoil, though many of them bloom rather later in the summer. The little common yellow trefoil (*Trifolium filiforme*), with its small flowers, not larger than a green pea, meet our eye in every country walk, blooming on every pasture land and wayside. The hop trefoil (*Trifolium procumbens*), a yellow flower, somewhat larger than the last-named species, is less common than that kind, but readily distinguished from it by its oval, hop-shaped blossoms. We have besides, on gravelly

heaths, and on banks and pastures, some very pretty downy purple trefoil, one of which, the hare's-foot trefoil (*Trifolium arvense*), took its name from the soft, silky, whitish tuft of which its flowers consist, and which resembles the foot of the hare. This is very common on pastures, and in corn-fields, during July and August. A less frequent but very singular species, is the strawberry-headed trefoil (*Trifolium fragiferum*), which has purplish red flowers an inch in diameter, and is often so coloured as to bear a considerable resemblance to a strawberry. It may, at a glance, be distinguished, by this circumstance, from the other trefoils; it is found in meadows during the middle of summer. A calcareous soil is that on which clovers flourish best; and it is well known that, if lime be strewed on some soils, a crop of clover will arise on lands from seeds which were scattered over them by the wild winds ages since, and which only needed this stimulus to arise and cover the earth.

The leaves of all trefoils are very sensitive to a reduced heat, and close their leaflets when the sun goes down to avoid chill. They are then said to be asleep. They also close







Meadow Clover. (*Trifolium medium*.)



Crimson Clover. (*Trifolium incarnatum*.)

and droop when the rain is coming on, and the clover field presents a singular appearance during a heavy shower. The ancients remarked, that they closed and trembled before a tempest; but, probably, the movement of gradually enfolding leaves was regarded as a trembling; or, perhaps, the fierce winds, which precede the storm, shook them so much as to originate this idea.

In warm climates, several species of so-called "clover" attain a great degree of luxuriance; though true clovers generally are best adapted to temperate regions. In Buenos Ayres a "clover" grows to such a height, that "men and cattle cannot see each other while passing through a plain covered with its flowers."

The Maltese "clover" is *Hedysarum coronaria*, and grows three to four feet in height.

The yellow cowslip, or paigle (*Primula veris*), and also the yellow oxlip (*Primula elatior*), will now be in flower. This latter plant is less common than the cowslip, and much like it, but it has larger flowers. The leaves of both are like those of the primrose. The cowslip was formerly called "petty mullein," and "palsy-wort"; and as the French still term

it, *herbe de la paralysie*, it probably had some old renown as a medicine. An ointment of cowslip leaves has long been used to remove tan and freckles from the sun-burnt complexion.

The cowslip is a great ornament to our spring meadows. Nightingales are affirmed by some ornithologists, to have a peculiar predilection for these flowers. It has been said that they are only found where cowslips are plentiful. "Certainly," says Mr. Jacob, in his *Flora of Devon and Cornwall*, "with regard to these counties, the coincidence is just": but the writer of these pages knows a copse, much frequented by nightingales, and from which a chorus of their songs issues in spring, but around which cowslips cannot be found for some miles.

Another meadow flower, the cuckoo-flower (*Cardamine pratensis*), with its pale lilac blossoms and pungent leaves, is now abundant in moist meadows; as are also several other species of cardamine, too closely allied to each other to be easily discriminated. The little dark-blue flower, which, though called the Felwort gentian (*Gentiana Amarella*), blooms in spring, may now be found in the meadow,

especially where the soil is composed of limestone. It is about three inches high, and its bell-shaped flowers grow in clusters. It is not quite so common as the species called field gentian (*Gentiana campestris*), which much resembles this, and is very abundant on chalky, hilly pastures, in the month of October. We have several other wild species of gentian, but all are rare.

The little wild pansy, or heartsease (*Viola tricolor*), is now in blossom on banks and cultivated fields. It is sometimes purple, at other times, yellow with purple streaks, but most commonly all its petals are of a pale sulphur colour. It is a species of violet. The numerous and beautiful pansies cultivated by florists, are mostly natives of Siberia, and the northern countries of Europe, and America; though a few like our sweet violet, are found within the tropics.

The early scorpion grass (*Myosotis collina*), with very small but very bright blue blossoms, is also a spring flower, and is common both on sterile fields and cultured lands; and now, on marshy meadows, we may see the butter-bur (*Petasites vulgaris*), which may easily be

described. This plant has a thick stem, with a crowded cluster of pink, or rather flesh-coloured flowers, and is apparently destitute of leaves. Like the coltsfoot, to which plant it is nearly allied, its blossoms long precede its foliage; but when this appears, it is very conspicuous, as the leaves are larger than those of any other wild flower.

By the latter end of April almost every woodland displays its stores of blue wild hyacinths (*Scilla nutans*). Some of the old herbalists, as Gerarde, term this beautiful flower the harebell; but the nodding blue-bell of the heath-land is the harebell of modern poets, and probably, also, of most of the older ones. The Germans call our woodland flower the *Englische* hyacinth; but it is a native not only of every county of England, but of every land of Europe. The roots contain a great quantity of starch, which, in former times, was used, not only by the laundress, but also instead of gum for pasting books and setting feathers on arrows. The fresh root is said to be very poisonous.

Our garden hyacinths, called eastern hyacinths (*Hyacinthus orientalis*), are very abundant in



Palestine. Larmartine found them in great beauty on the plains, at the foot of Mount Lebanon. Kitto, in his *Pictorial Palestine*, says, "the narcissus, the hyacinth, and the violet are in flower in the Holy Land in the beginning of February. One species of narcissus is cultivated in the open fields, by the people of Aleppo, and towards the end of winter, certain Arab women are seen in the streets, carrying baskets of the flowers for sale, and chanting as they walk along, 'How delightful its season! its Maker is bountiful.'" The Holy Land has also the grape hyacinth and the blue grape hyacinth in its corn-fields.

The starch grape hyacinth (*Muscari racemosum*) is sometimes found in grass fields, and among ruins, in this country, but many botanists think that it is not indigenous. The circumstance that a flower is found among ruins, renders it probable that a garden was formerly in the neighbourhood, and that the flower was once cultivated there. This flower is well-known by being so common in gardens. It resembles a bunch of dark purple grapes, and when bruised a quantity of clammy starch-like substance issues from it. This flower has also

the odour of wet starch. It has a large bulbous root.

Very nearly allied to the hyacinth is the vernal squill (*Scilla verna*), which is now in flower on rocks by the sea-side. It is about four or five inches high, with blue bells and long slender leaves. It is common on the coasts of the northern and western parts of Great Britain, and frequent in the Orkney and Shetland isles, where the bleak winds are so unfavourable to vegetation that few flowers will flourish. The bulbous root contains a very useful medicine, but as it is also a powerful poison, it should never be taken but under the direction of a medical adviser.

The large greenish yellow blossoms of the two species of wild hellebore now stand out boldly under the hedges. These are the bear's-foot hellebore (*Helleborus viridis*), and the stinking hellebore (*Helleborus fætidus*); the latter species is clearly distinguished from the other, by the purple colour at the edge of its green cup. They have both large leathery leaves, and, as well as the garden hellebores, among which is the Christmas-rose, are extremely poisonous.

The white balls of the guelder-rose





Kidney Vetch, or Lady's Finger.  
(*Anthyllus vulneraria*.)



Tufted Vetch. (*Vicia cracca*.)

(*Viburnum Opulus*) now thicken on the shrub, its

“Silver globes, light as the foaming surf,  
Which the wind severs from the broken wave;”

being ornamental both to the shrubbery and the hedge-row. These flowers, however, are not so globular in their wild as in their cultivated state, when in the garden; they contrast with the bloom of the lilac-tree, and well deserve their common name of snowball. The guelder-rose derived its name from having been planted and flourishing profusely in Guelder-land, in the Low Countries; but the plant is a native of almost every country of Europe, and quite common in our wild hedges. The berries are among the most beautiful of our autumnal fruits. They are of an elliptical shape, very juicy and brilliantly red. They have a very nauseous taste, so much so, that one can only wonder how they can be so palatable to the Swedes; yet the people of Sweden relish them greatly when made into a paste with flour and honey. In Siberia, they are not only eaten thus, but a spirit is distilled from them by fermenting the berries with flour. The young shoots are made into tobacco-pipes and whip-handles.

The box shrub (*Buxus sempervirens*), so well known in its dwarf state as an edging to the garden border, puts forth its green flowers in April. It was formerly used for decking houses; for in olden times, not only was the Christmas holly placed on the chimney-piece, but every season gave its proper flowers, or shrubs, to adorn the English home. Thus the old poet Herrick records these long-lost customs:

“When yew is out, the birch comes in,  
And many flowers beside;  
Both of a fresh and fragrant kin,  
To honour Whitsuntide.

“Green rushes then, and scented bents,  
With cooler oaken boughs,  
Come in for comely ornaments  
To re-adorn the house.”

About this time we may search for the beautiful dark-purple silky stars of the pasque-flower (*Anemone Pulsatilla*). It grows on chalky pastures, or on banks, and, sometimes, though more rarely, in woods; and the rare introduced *Anemone ranunculoides*, with its soft yellow flowers, springs up in some few sequestered woods at this season. It has been found in several parts of Kent and Hertfordshire.

Among the most common, and certainly one



of the prettiest flowers which we in this month gather from the woodlands, is the wood-sorrel (*Oxalis Acetosella*), though, unless the spring be forward, we shall not find it till the latter end of the month. While we admire the pencilled beauty of this blossom, we observe too the delicate light green-tripled leaf. We have not a wild flower which can rival the sensitive plant of warmer regions—that plant, the consideration of whose mysterious sensibility, is said to have driven the ancient philosopher to madness,—yet if any British flower might be called a sensitive plant, it is this. Not only does its foliage close and droop at the approach of the evening dews, but at the coming rain, even before the “storm sings i’ the wind,” the wood-sorrel compresses its leaves, and even when handled roughly in gathering, it shrinks from the touch. The wood-sorrel grows especially around the trunks of decayed trees. That pleasing poet Charlotte Smith, describes the flower-gatherer :

“Who from the tumps with bright green mosses clad  
Plucks the wood-sorrel, with its light green leaves  
Heart-shaped, and triply-folded ; and its root  
Creeping like beaded coral !”

The plant is generally most plentiful in the thickest part of the wood.

Wood-sorrel is abundant on the Alps and other mountains, and is found as far to the north of our globe as travellers have ever yet penetrated. In Lapland, it is so plentiful and so much used, that Linnæus says the natives of that country take scarcely any other vegetable food than sorrel and angelica. The great botanist adds, that it is in Norway the *primula*, or first flower of spring.

The old herbalists had a variety of names for the woodland flower. It was called woodsower, stubwort, wood trefoil, cuckoo's meat, and alleluya. Gerarde says of it, "Apothecaries and herbalists call it alleluya and cuckowe's meat; either because the cuckowe feedeth thereon, or by reason when it springeth forth the cuckowe singeth most; at which time also alleluya was wont to be sung in our churches." It is still known both in Spain and Italy by the name of alleluya. It is much used on the continent as a fish-sauce, and was, among our ancestors, in great repute, as the chief ingredient in the "green sauce," which, in former days, always accompanied fish on the table.





Blackthorn, or Sloe. (*Prunus spinosa*.)



Spring Cinque-foil. (*Potentilla verna*.)

The acid flavour of the sorrels, renders them generally palatable to children, and, if taken only in small quantities, they are not pernicious; but no one should, at one time, eat more than a handful of wood-sorrel. The expressed juice of this plant is used to remove spots and iron-moulds from linen. It is also diluted with milk and given as a febrifuge in our English villages, and still more commonly in Russia.

A yellow species, like the wood-sorrel (*Oxalis corniculata*), is occasionally found in shady places, but it is rare. The plant which is most commonly known as sorrel, and which may be seen in any summer meadow, is the common sorrel (*Rumex Acetosa*). It is most abundant on the sandy soil. Its acidity is less than that of the wood-sorrel, and its spikes of dark red flowers often rise above the grass, and may be seen very plainly on the pasture land. The sheep's sorrel, too (*Rumex Acetosella*), is scarcely less frequent on open places, and its flowers are similar to those of the field-sorrel, but much smaller. These two sorrels are not in bloom until June and July. They resemble the wood-sorrel in their acid flavour only: botanists

class them among the dock plants. A red dye is procured from the field-sorrel. The smaller species is an invariable indication of a dry soil. Both kinds are very nutritious to cattle.

From the old wall, the sweet wallflower (*Cheiranthus Cheiri*) now greets us with its odour. Many are the flowers which we value for their fragrance, but scarcely one is sweeter than this. It is much prized in the east.

The red-berried bryony (*Bryonia dioica*) is now abundant, its large vine-shaped leaves covering the hedges, and twining among the bushes, both by their twisting form and by the numerous and long curling tendrils which grow on every stem. It is often called wild hop; but those who live in the counties in which hops are cultivated, know it to be very different from that plant. We have no wild trailing plant, which better than this merits the old name of white vine. The flowers are marked with green veins, and though not showy, are when examined found to be very beautiful; but it is the luxuriant growth of the bryony, which renders it an elegant plant. The stems often extend four or five feet, and grow much faster than



those of plants in general. Their rapid growth is attributed, by Linnæus, to the immense size of its white branching root, which was formerly much used as a medicine. It is very acrid, while fresh, but, when dried, it yields a flour which has often supplied food to the poor in times of scarcity. Its properties are not, however, so certainly known as that it can be recommended as food.

Happily for us, we are not subject to those occasional seasons of dearth which were formerly experienced in this country, when the poor were compelled to seek vegetable food from wild roots and seeds. An old writer, speaking of the dearth which prevailed in England in 1555, says: "At this time plenty of peas did grow on the sea-shore, near Dunwich, in Suffolk, never set or sown by human industry; which, being gathered in full ripeness, much abated the high price of the market, and preserved many hungry families from perishing." The plant which thus appeared at so needful a season was the sea-side pea (*Pisum maritimum*), which is a native of our shores, but not usually very common or abundant. It is a pretty wild pea, sufficiently similar to the sweet pea of the

garden to remind us of that flower. There is a tradition that the plant sprang up in consequence of the wreck of a vessel near the coast, on which the seeds were washed by the waves: but this is scarcely probable, as the bitterness of this pea renders it unlikely that it had been of sufficient value for exportation; and the seaside pea is so different from all other kinds, that the flower could not have been the produce of the seed of any other pea. Like the writer just quoted, we must attribute its growth to the providential interference of God, but cannot account for the means employed for its production.

This food was a tolerably wholesome one, and formed a far better substitute for corn than the diet to which many of the French peasantry were reduced in 1817. At this season, the heavy rains which fell over the greater part of France, had, in some departments especially, prevented the ripening of the corn, and it became so dear as that the rich only could purchase it. The poor were compelled to live on wild sorrel, nettles, thistles, and even on the boiled leaves of trees. This food sufficed to preserve life; but a large number of those who

lived on it, were afflicted both with dropsy and other complaints. During the disastrous campaign of Napoleon's army at Moscow, the unfortunate soldiers boiled and ate the common grass of the field, and delirium was the consequence of this wretched food.

Our wild bryony abounds with a fetid juice, which is most abundant in its berries. These may well be termed coral-berries, for they are not clear like those of the nightshade, nor do they glisten like them; but they are perfectly round, smooth, and unpolished, and of the most beautiful red colour. Notwithstanding their poisonous nature, they are eaten by birds; and while no other animal but the goat will feed on the branches of the bryony, these are to him a delicious repast; he will leave untouched all other vegetables to feed on this. Several kinds of bryony are much used in India, and other countries, as medicines.

## MAY

Spring woodlands—Tway blade—Brown-winged Orchis—Man Orchis—Bee Orchis—Fly Orchis—Butterfly Orchis—Ladies' Tresses—Strawberry Flower—Hautboy Strawberry—Lily of the Valley—Solomon's Seal—Sweet Woodruff—Herb Paris—Bugle—Spindle Tree—Dogwood—Black Currant—Red Currant—Saintfoin—Moving Plant—Theory of sensation in vegetables—Knot Grass—Foxtail Grass—Reed meadow Grass—Buttercup—Hawthorn—Old Superstitions—Furze—Clematis—Bilberry—Whortleberry—Stitchwort—Periwinkle—Toadflax—Wall Pellitory—Small Bugloss—Dyer's Bugloss—Boroge—Comfrey—Lung-wort—Rest Harrow—Common Juniper—Bitter Vetch—Cormeille—Vetches—Red Pottage—Lady's Finger—Hedge Mustard—Field Mustard—London Rocket—Peony—Iris—Lychnis—Golden Saxifrage—Rue-leaved Saxifrage—Meadow Saxifrage—London Pride—Dutch Myrtle

FROM about the middle of March until summer is fairly ushered in, vegetation makes such rapid progress that we every day observe some changes. This is particularly the case if we walk among the woods, for never are the woods so bright nor so full of those flowers which love the shade, as during April and May. The spring colouring of the trees,



Wild Strawberry. (*Fragaria vesca*.)



Cloudberry. (*Rubus Chamæmorus*.)





too, has its own emerald beauty, though differing from that of the richly variegated autumn.

There is also something peculiar in the life and activity of the spring woodlands, which contrasts with the stillness of the autumnal season in the same spots—when no birds are singing, and when the winds are still, the influence of their shade and silence is like that of the starry sky, soothing and calming to the mind ; but the spring wood is all so joyous and so full of voices, that they who wander thither, leaving their hearts open to the impressions of nature, feel that its songs and soft green light, and delicate shadows inspire to gladness. A wild thrill of delight is among the trees. The storms of March have left behind, the lilac clouds and the bright gleams of sunshine, and, as yet, the quivering leaves hide not the light, and a thousand mingled voices hail the coming of summer. Happy are they to whom God has given hearts attuned to the utterances of nature, and whom the cares and follies of the world have not weaned away from its teachings! Happy too, if in the seclusion of the woodland, their hearts can be lifted up to God, with wonder and admiration of His providential

goodness to those of His inferior creatures which sport and sing in the woods ; and more blessed still, if they can recognize that God, not only as their Creator and the Father of their spirits, but commune with Him as their Friend and their Guide, and, like Adam in the brighter bowers of Eden, hear the voice of God among the trees.

The turf which enamels the ground of the wood is rich with a variety of flowers :—

“As if the rainbows of the fresh wild spring  
Had blossom'd where they fell.”

The hyacinth, the anemone, the violet, and the wood-sorrel, are as beautiful as during last month, and many of the large tribe of orchis flowers are coming into bloom. A very singular one is the leafless, brown bird's-nest orchis (*Neottia Nidus-avis*). One might see it growing, and on passing it hastily, take it for a withered flower ; but on gathering it, we see that, brown as it is, it yet has life and freshness. It is just of the colour of some drooping oak-leaf, which is fading on the autumn bough, or strewed among multitudes on the winter earth. It is not, however, on account of its colour,

that it received its familiar name. Unlike the generality of our British orchises, its root is not formed of bulbs, but of a number of fibres, crossing and entangling each other, like the sticks of a crow's nest. Its common companion in the wood, is another species, the green tway-blade (*Listera ovata*), with its broadly ovate leaves and spike of small yellowish-green flowers. They are both of the orchis tribe, and persons accustomed to this family of plants would easily recognize them as belonging to it.

More conspicuous than these, and more beautiful also, is that species of orchis commonly called the lady orchis, which is the brown-winged orchis of the botanist (*Orchis purpurea*). It is during May, very common in chalky woods, especially in Kent, and is the handsomest of our wild orchideous plants. The stem is sometimes two or three feet high, and the large and thickly set flowers form a cluster of the size of a bunch of grapes. The upper part of the blossom—the helmet as it is called—is of a dark brown purple colour, but the lower lip is white and beautifully spotted. Gay enough it is to represent a lady delicately attired—for “even Solomon in all his glory was

not arrayed like one of these,"—but in what other respects it resembles a lady, it would be hard to tell. A similar remark may be made of the man orchis (*Aceras anthropophora*) which is as much like a man as an animal, and far more like some of the smaller insect tribe, as the gnat. One month later, and we may find on the chalky down two or three species of the orchis plant, which certainly much resemble the insects from which they are named. These are the bee, the fly, and the spider orchises. The latter, however, is so similar to the bee orchis, that many writers consider it merely a variety of the same plant.

The bee orchis (*Ophrys apifera*) is abundant on some chalky and clayey soils, yet is so confined to peculiar spots, that it can hardly be called a common wild-flower; in Scotland it is almost unknown. In many parts of Kent and the Isle of Wight, it flourishes in profusion. The blossom is nearly as large as an humble-bee, and so like that insect in form and colour, that it might mislead the passer-by into the belief that a bee was hovering on its stem. It never deceives the bee himself, for, on a warm day of June, or July, a number of these busy



Plate XVII.



Dog-Rose. (*Rosa canina*.)



Service-tree. (*Sorbus domestica*)



creatures settle upon it, and rob its nectary of the sweet juice which it contains in abundance. The fly orchis, too (*Ophrys muscifera*), grows on similar spots, and as nearly resembles the fly as this does the bee.

The resemblance of insects is far more striking in the orchideous plants of tropical countries. One foreign species, of a different genus (*Oncidium papilio*), is so similar to our tortoise-shell butterfly, as continually to deceive the eye of the traveller. There is something so remarkable in these resemblances that the lovers of flowers usually feel much interested in the orchis tribe, and many exotic orchises have been of late years introduced into this country.

Our native orchises, which though not in bloom till next month, are now sending up from the earth their long glossy leaves. There are more than thirty species of our wild flowers, not all called orchis, but all of the orchideous tribe, and all much alike. The two most common species, which are found in almost every English county, are the early purple orchis (*Orchis mascula*), and the green-winged meadow orchis (*Orchis Morio*). The former has its leaves marked with dark purple spots,

and is very frequent in the woods in May. The latter is found in meadows at the same season. They are both of a pinkish-purple colour, and the wood species is sometimes deliciously fragrant. The meadow orchis often grows pretty thickly among the grass, and has been found with fawn-coloured blossoms. The roots of both these flowers are perfectly wholesome and nutritious.

The marsh orchis (*Orchis latifolia*), and the spotted palmate orchis (*Orchis maculata*), are also common, but on moist places only. They have pale tinted lilac, or white flowers, and are thus quite distinct from the two kinds just mentioned. They are also taller and more slender, but by no means so general. In Essex and Cambridgeshire they are abundant. On the bogs about Tunbridge Wells they are among the most common flowers; yet in many districts in Kent, famous as it is for orchis plants, and possessing peculiarities of soil necessary for their production, not a single plant of these two species can be found.

The butterfly orchis (*Habenaria bifolia*) is another flower which by its beauty and frequency claims our notice. It has white fragrant

blossoms, the scent of which is considerably increased in the evening. It blooms in June in the moist copse, and though much like a butterfly, yet resembles some smaller and more slender-winged insect. No hothouse flower is more delicately beautiful than this simple tenant of the woods, which so often lives and dies unseen by the eye of man.

A very pretty but very small species of orchis, called ladies' tresses (*Spiranthes autumnalis*), is common on dry hilly pastures, but so uncertain in its appearance, that we cannot depend on finding a single plant in the next summer on a field decked this year with thousands. A field in the neighbourhood of Tunbridge Wells, was, in the summer of 1843, so full of it, that one might gather it at almost every step. In the August following not a stem or leaf indicated that it had ever grown there. This flower had several old names. It was called sweet-cods, sweet-cullins, and stander grass.

In considering the orchises we have rather anticipated the season of the year, as several of them grow in the later months. We may, however, with tolerable certainty expect to find in the May woods, a pretty and well-known

blossom, the wild strawberry flower (*Fragaria vesca*), which blows both now and in June. The patches of this meek white flower lie among its leaves on the grassy bank which skirts the wood, and are still more numerous beneath the shelter of the overarching boughs. This flower is of the rosaceous family of plants, its shape being like that of the wild briar-rose, and all fruits growing on a plant bearing this shaped flower, may be safely eaten. A more wholesome, or a sweeter fruit than this, cannot be gathered. The wood-strawberry is common throughout Great Britain. It is equally so in the woods of France; and the Parisians esteem this small fruit, and that of the equally small alpine strawberry, as far superior to the hautboy.

The different kinds of strawberry are natives of temperate, or cold climates, and are common in Europe and the greater part of America. They also often present themselves to the eye of the traveller, on the hill-sides of Asia and Africa. In cold countries, berries generally are more abundant than in warmer regions, and the wild strawberry grows in great quantities in the woods of Sweden, and is much valued for desserts. Linnæus considered it the most



Plate XVIII.



Water Purslane. (*Peplys Portula*.)

Rosemary Willow-herb. (*Epilobium Dodonæi*.)



wholesome of all fruits, and records that he, in two instances, was cured of fits of the gout by eating wild strawberries. It is commonly carried about the towns of Sweden for sale, and the great botanist desired his servants to purchase, at all times, the strawberries which were offered at his door, however large the quantity. Hoffman thought that, if eaten in the early stage of consumption, they would arrest the progress of that malady.

The hautboy strawberry (*Fragaria elatior*) grows in several of our wild woods and hedges, and is reckoned among British plants, yet it can be scarcely considered indigenous. It is, by most writers, thought to be a native of the American woods, but it was commonly cultivated before the time of Henry VIII.—a period in which few fruits were reared in England, until after Catherine of Aragon had had them imported. The beauty both of the fruit and flower of the strawberry had attracted the notice of Lord Bacon. Speaking of a flower-garden: “Trees,” says he, “I would have none in it, but some thicket made of sweetbriar and honeysuckle, and some wild vine amongst; and the ground set with violets, strawberries, and

primroses; for these are sweet, and prosper in the shade."

How beautiful now are the delicate bells of the lily of the valley (*Convallaria majalis*), as they grow, half-hidden in the shade of their two broad green leaves! These flowers are now brought in baskets for sale, into the towns, and often planted in town gardens, there to pine away far from their native shades. The root of this flower is bitter, and has medicinal properties, and the juice of its leaves, prepared with lime, yields to the manufacturer a beautiful dye. By its side may sometimes be seen the wax-like drooping blossoms of the Solomon's seal (*Polygonatum multiflorum*), with their delicate green edges. Its root, called whitewort, is used for bruises, and certainly removes their blackness. Superstitious people, a few years ago, thought that the great botanist and naturalist, Solomon, had given this virtue to the plant, by stamping it with his seal; in proof of which the herbalist would point to the marks which are to be found on the knotted root, and claim for his remedy a wondrous efficacy.

The sweet woodruff (*Asperula odorata*), with its clear white cluster of small flowers, and its

rings of green leaves, is now in bloom around the roots of trees. Its fresh leaves are almost scentless, but we have no native flower which so long retains its odour when dried. Withering says, of it, that its strongly aromatic flowers, infused in water, make a beverage which far excels all the teas of China. The dried leaves, when mixed with snuff, are also said to give to it the sweet odour of the Tonquin bean—without being, as that seed is, prejudicial to the eyesight—while the scent is more lasting.

A very singular flower, called herb Paris, (*Paris quadrifolia*), now grows in moist shady woods. From the summit of the stalk proceed four broad leaves, which form a cross. The flower, which is green, consists of four petals, and the leaves of the calyx, or cup, are four; this arrangement is so peculiar, that the flower may easily be known by this description. On account of its four cross leaves, it has the name of true-love knot. Green flowers are always of a suspicious nature; a poison often lurks in their blossoms, leaves, or fruit; nor is the herb Paris an exception. It has, however, been used medicinally, and Linnæus recommends it to the attention of the faculty. The

leaves and berries partake of the narcotic principle of opium, and the juice of the berry is applied to remove pain in the eye. As a flower, the herb Paris is rather singular than beautiful, but we admire it as an instance of the wonderful variety which exists in "the flowers of the field."

The common bugle (*Ajuga reptans*) is another flower generally found in the woods in May. A hardy plant it is, its purple blossoms sometimes venturing forth in January, though less vigorously than at their proper season. It also grows on moist hedge-banks, and varies with a pale lilac, or even white blossom, the shape of which is much like that of the ground ivy. It was formerly called sicklewort, or carpenter's herb; for, in former times, when the labourer was cut by the sickle, or other sharp instrument, some plant which grew near him was employed to cure the wound, and this was found very serviceable, and is still a common remedy. A proverb was very common in France concerning this and another wood plant, "He needeth neither physician nor surgeon who hath bugle and sanicle." This later flower, however, is known to be a positively injurious application,

especially if it grow in a moist place, which, indeed, is the situation in which it flourishes most.

The white flowers of the holly are now in full beauty, and the spindle-tree (*Euonymus europæus*) is covered with its small green blossom. Then there are the white clusters of the cornel, or dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*), coming out upon the red twigs of the bush, and blooming occasionally all the summer, till winter is fully in; its leaves turning red at the season when those of plants in general turn yellow. It is found more especially on chalk, or limestone soils, and its wood has often been burned as an ingredient in making gunpowder. This shrub was also called gaten tree, and Chaucer speaks of its fruit as the gaten berrie. Its hard wood was anciently used for martial instruments; and Virgil has celebrated the plant as "the good and beautiful cornel."

In some few of our native woods, we may find the red and black currant bushes, and the gooseberry also, all of which flower in May. The fruit of the black currant (*Ribes nigrum*) is, in Kent, called gazel, and was known there, by this name, in the time of Queen Elizabeth.

All these bushes grow in cold climates, and are abundant in the snowy woods of the north. The black currant is common in the woods of Russia and Siberia; not only do the Russians make wine of its berries, but the Siberians make a tea of its strongly scented leaves. The red currant (*Ribes rubrum*) is planted in Essex for making wine.

But quitting the woodland, and coming away into the open field, the eye is greeted by the beautiful field of sainfoin (*Onobrychis sativa*) which is now most brilliantly red, and on which an unclouded sun throws a dazzling lustre. But the sainfoin, though cultivated in fields, is a doubtfully wild flower; it is not, however, common in Scotland. It springs up naturally, on dry and chalky soils only, its long roots penetrating between the crevices in the rock, or chalky cliff; and it is upon this kind of soil that it can be cultivated to most perfection. On several of our moors, as Royston Heath and Salisbury Plain, it is plentiful. It is not till the latter end of May that the sainfoin is in full flower on the field, and it then contrasts beautifully with the light green of the corn-field, and the deeper tint of the meadow. It was formerly



called cock's head grass, and French grass. Fuller, commenting on the vegetable productions of the different counties of England, says of it, "It is called saintfoin, or holy hay. Superstition may seem in the name, but there is nothing but good husbandry in the sowing thereof. It was first fetched out of France from about Paris, and since is sown in divers places in England, especially at Cobham Park, in Kent, where it thriveth extraordinary well on dry, chalky banks, where nothing else will grow." The plant is, in the present day, very plentiful as a wild flower, and decks the hedge-banks of some of the lovely green lanes which lie around the ancient hall of Cobham.

A most singular instance of spontaneous motion is exhibited by a foreign species, called the Telegraph plant (*Hedysarum gyrans*). This is a handsome flower of a purplish pink colour. It grows on the banks of the Ganges, and is called by the natives of India, *Burram chandali*. No sooner do its young leaves shoot out of the ground than they begin moving up and down; now with sudden jerks, now with a gentle waving motion. By day or night, in sun or shower, the plant is never at rest;

and if the beholder grasp it with his hand, and compel it to be still for a moment, it is no sooner released than it recommences its action with more rapidity than before, as if trying to regain the time it had lost while under pressure. The leaves are composed of three leaflets. Sometimes one leaflet will wave up and down while the others are motionless, and sometimes the three leaflets move simultaneously; but it has been observed that the whole plant is seldom agitated at one time. This flower is a universal wonder, no botanist being able to account for its voluntary movement.

The well-known irritability of the sensitive plant, the Venus's fly-trap, the sun dew, and others, is caused by the touch, and is considered by botanists as similar to the action of muscular animal fibre, under the influence of galvanism. But this plant needs no approach of external objects to impel its action, nor is it influenced by electricity in the air, or by any perceptible cause. In our hothouses, the plant loses some of its acting power, and has only a faint tremulous motion. It is also, in India, sometimes nearly quiet during the middle of the





Evening Primrose. (*Oenothera biennis*.)



4 Horn-nut. (*Tropa natans*.)

day, but its agitation is, in its own climate, generally as unceasing as that of the heaving ocean, or the beating heart.

The singular movement of this plant, and the others just referred to, has often been adduced in support of the theory, that vegetables are endowed with sensation. Wordsworth has said :—

“It is my faith that every flower  
Enjoys the air it breathes.”

In modern times, this belief seems almost left to the poet ; but a few years since, it was held by the philosopher.

We can now scarcely walk a step from the paved ways of the city, without seeing the small reddish-white blossoms of the knotgrass (*Polygonum Aviculare*). This little plant is as familiar to our view, as the meadow grass. Forming green patches by every wayside, on the borders of the public highway ; shooting up under the walls of the crowded city, or even between the stones of the street. Commoner than even that common flower, the daisy ; yet it is scarcely known by name, to any but the botanist. Milton speaks of it, as

“The knotgrass dew besprent ;”

and George Herbert, in giving his advice to the country parson, on the choice of wholesome and medicinal herbs, enumerates this. Notwithstanding its former repute, no "simpler" of modern times would gather it; and the lover of wild flowers often treads over it daily, without any regard. This plant, though called grass, has little more affinity to the true grasses, than that elegant white flower, which, from its beauty, has been termed the grass of Parnassus. Several plants have been called grass; but the true grasses have characteristic marks, which, when once known, are obvious even to those unacquainted with botany. They have all long slender leaves, hollow jointed stems, and green flowers. Swine are so fond of the knotgrass, that it is, in some counties, commonly called swine's-cress, or hog-weed; and the plant strewed so abundantly over our land, forms, by its seeds and young buds, a good store for the birds. From Milton's lines we may suppose it to be a pleasant food for sheep, as he speaks of the evening, when

"The chewing flocks,  
Had ta'en their supper of that savoury herb,  
The knotgrass."



Several of the true grasses flower during May, though the greater number are not decked with their green and purple panicles, or their silvery pyramids, till the later months. Among the early blooming grasses, we may mention the common fox-tail grass (*Alopecurus pratensis*), which grows on almost every spot of pasture; and is a very useful grass for cattle, blooming twice in the year; and being ripe for the scythe even as early as this month. Its long yellow-greenish blooms are covered with silvery hairs. The bulbous meadow grass (*Poa bulbosa*), and the annual meadow grass (*Poa annua*), are now commonly in flower; the latter, on all green places, in all countries. We have fourteen species of the poa grass. One common kind, the tallest of our native grasses, the reed meadow grass (*Poa aquatica*), is often six feet high. It has a long creeping root, and grows either by the sides of ditches, or on other moist lands. In the fenny districts of Cambridgeshire and Lincolnshire, it is a very valuable plant of pasturage; but when it grows in rivers, its tangling roots and luxuriant growth make it very troublesome, and it soon fills up a river which has not a rapid current.

Meadows are, at all seasons, pleasant spots. In the dreariest months of the year, their fainter greenness is agreeable to the eye, which has lately looked but on the cold plain of snow or the leafless trees. But when May comes, and the grass twinkles in the sunshine; and the daisies open their round eyes by thousands among it; and the buttercups gleam in rich profusion, then is the time fully to enjoy the meadow. These simple flowers give delight to the many "who long in populous cities pent," now wander forth into the fields. Nor would we forget the joy which they afford to children. Children spring up, like the buttercup, everywhere, and are linked by strong ties to almost every human heart; and those who can look back to rural walks of early life, when

"Thoughts themselves were birds, and stars, and flowers,"

are disposed to sympathize with the joy of the little ones, as they gaze on the yellow field.

The buttercup is a species of *ranunculus*. The kind which blooms at this early season is the bulbous buttercup (*Ranunculus bulbosus*), and may be distinguished from the other flowering kinds, by its bulbous root. The May

buttercups have not passed away, before the creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), and the acrid crowfoot (*Ranunculus acris*), make their appearance. These bloom on, till the end of August, and here and there, a few of the latter species may be found under the hedges, till Time, with his autumnal scythe, has mowed down every flower, and the stormy winds proclaim the winter.

In the hedges which border the field, or afford their shade to the green country lane, the flower which receives its name from this month—the May, or hawthorn (*Cratægus Oxyacantha*)—is radiant in beauty. Very rarely is it in bloom by the first of May; though by the first of May of the old style, which is twelve days later, the hedge is often white with its pearly blossoms. A decoction of the fragrant flowers of the May is said to counteract poison.

The hawthorn bough was formerly hung over every door of England, on the May morning; and brought in from the woods with May-day rejoicings; and it still, in Athens, on that day, graces every doorway of the classic city. The custom of going on May mornings, at break of day, into the woods, to bring away

the boughs and flowers, was much discountenanced by our reformers. They regarded it as the remains of an evil superstition; for it had its origin in the spring rites paid by the heathen to Flora; and they also disapproved of the noisy and profligate revelling with which it was often accompanied. They preached continually against "doing observance to a morn of May," and were greatly the means of suppressing May-sports, and May-gatherings. The first day of this month was also called Robin Hood's day; and the sincere and earnest bishop Latimer complained, that once when he was about to preach in a town on that day, he could get no audience; because all the young men and maidens, "were gone a maying." "I found," said he, "the churches fast locked. I tarryed there half an houre or more, and at last, the key was found; one of the parish came to me and says, 'Syr, this is a busy day with us, we cannot hear you; it is Robin Hood's day. The parish are gone abroad to gather for Robin Hood. I pray you let them not.' So," as the good bishop observes, "he was fain to give place to Robin Hood, and his men."

An infusion of the hawthorn-bark gives a

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yellow dye ; and, if mixed with copperas, yields a fine black colour.

The common hawthorn was the distinguishing badge of the royal house of Tudor. Miss Strickland thus states its origin : When the body of Richard III. was slain at Redmore Heath, it was plundered of its armour and ornaments. "The crown was hidden by a soldier in a hawthorn bush ; but was soon found, and carried back to Lord Stanley ; who placed it on the head of his son-in-law, saluting him by the title of Henry VII. ; while the victorious army sang *Te Deum*, on the blood-stained heath.

'Oh Redmore, then it seem'd thy name was not in vain.'

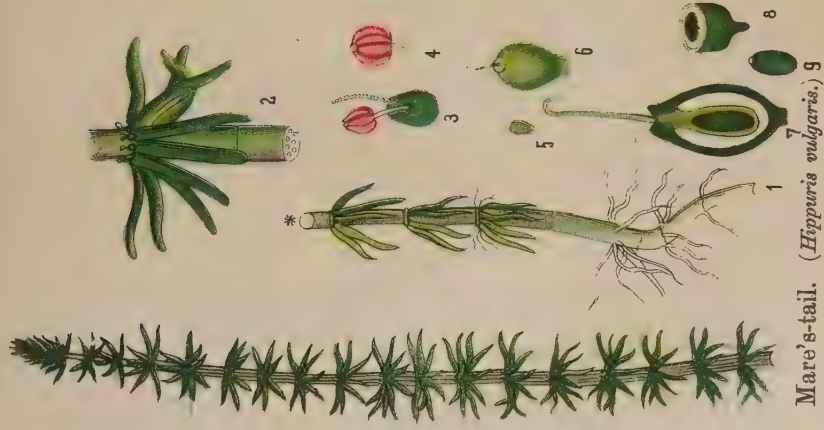
"It was in memory of this picturesque fact, that the red-berried hawthorn once sheltered the crown of England, that the house of Tudor assumed the device of a crown in a bush of fruited hawthorn. The proverb of 'Cleave to the crown though it hang on a bush,' alludes to the same circumstance."

The wild-cherry, the apple, the pear, and the mountain ash are all now in bloom in hedgerow, or copse ; while the common is

bright with the yellow flowers of the furze (*Ulex europæus*). Unheeded by those who can delight only in the flower brought from afar, it is ever an object of admiration to the lover of simple beauty. Linnæus fell on his knees, and thanked God for its loveliness, when first he beheld it. Among the plants of his native land, he knew not one which could equal it; and he attempted in vain to introduce it into Sweden. Hardy as it is, and capable of bearing the winds which sweep over the bleak moorland, or by the seashore; yet it would not grow in the northern land, and even in the garden in which Linnæus planted it, it sickened and died. Dillenius, too, looked upon our heath-lands, covered with its profusion of golden flowers, and said that he could not find words to express the pleasure which the sight of this plant had given him. The furze is also an evergreen. Its flowers last from May till summer is ended; and even during nipping frosts, the bush is sometimes thick with its half-expanded flowers, which seem only awaiting the sunshine, to stand out like so many glittering butterflies upon the spiny branches.

The furze is used for hedges, and its young





Mare's-tail. (*Hippuris vulgaris.*) 9



Red Bryonia. (*Bryonia dioica.*)



tops are eaten by animals. To the poor it furnishes winter firing, and is often gathered from the heath, and stacked by the cottage-door for that purpose. In former times, large tracts of common were cultivated with the shrub in various parts of Devonshire, to supply the winter fuel. The numerous pods which hang on the summer bush, are soon cleared away by the birds, and a store of honey is furnished to the bees by their fragrant pea-shaped flowers. The summer wind bears to the traveller a delightful odour from the common covered with the furze; and so beautiful is it that we have not a wild flower which better deserves the praises that the poets have lavished upon it. The French call this plant, *jonc marin*, because it bears the sea-breeze so well. The name of *Ulex* is derived from a Celtic word, signifying a sharp point; in Scotland, it is usually termed gorse, or whin. The Russian cultivates it in a green-house, as one of his rarest flowers. A double variety of furze grows wild on the heaths of Devonshire, and is a handsome and fragrant addition to the bushes and trees of the shrubbery.

On many a hedge may now be seen the

graceful flowers of the plant, called, familiarly, traveller's joy, or virgin's bower, or wild clematis. It is the *Clematis Vitalba* of the botanist. The Greek word from which its name is taken, signifies the young shoot of a vine, or tendril, and indicates its twining nature. The clematis, though rare in the northern portions of this country, is very abundant in the greater part of England, especially in the south, and on limestone, or chalky soils, where, in May, or June, its clusters of greenish white are thickly scattered over the hedges. The flowers are succeeded by a quantity of seeds, crowned with tufts of silvery down, which look very beautiful through the greater part of the winter, and the plant may well be abundant, for these feathered seeds are exactly suited for flying on the air, and are often carried about by birds. In winter these little tufts of down are stripped off by the harvest mice, which make of them and other materials, soft little nests, as warm as a feather bed, and not unlike the nests of a bird, and there, leaving their cheerless little dwellings in the earth, they come and spend a part of their time.

The stems of the clematis often extend more





Gooscherry. (*Ribes Grossularia*, var. *Uva-crispa*.)



Mountain Currant. (*Ribes alpinum*.)



than twenty feet over the hedge; and, although it is destitute of the curling tendrils, which, like those of the vine, support the plant, yet its flexible leaf-stalks answer the purpose more fully. The young stems are, in this month, of a purplish green colour, but become brown and hard in the course of summer; and then they serve the cottagers instead of pipes, for they are often smoked by country people. Bishop Mant has some lines on this pretty flower:—

“The Traveller’s Joy,  
Most beauteous when its flowers assume  
Their autumn form of feathery plume:  
The Traveller’s Joy! name well bestow’d  
On that wild plant, which by the road  
Of Southern England, to adorn  
Fails not the hedge of prickly thorn,  
On wilding rose-bush, apt to creep  
O’er the dry limestone’s craggy steep,  
There still a gay companion near  
To the way-faring traveller.”

The old herbalist, Gerarde, gave the flower this name. He says, “This is commonly called, *Viorna quasi via ornana*, of decking and adorning waies and hedges where people travel, and therefore I have named it the Traveller’s Joy.”

Growing in small groups, on hedge-banks, or on heaths or woods, the whortleberry bush is

now coming into blossom. There are four wild species of this plant, but the most common is that called the bilberry (*Vaccinium Myrtillus*). This shrub is low and straggling, seldom found alone, but generally clustering on different spots of the land on which it appears. Indeed, this tribe of plants is never found growing singly. We do not meet with an individual plant, but it always grows in numbers, and generally abounds in the neighbourhood for some miles. This species is an elegant little plant, its leaves are of a beautiful green, and its small red flowers hang among them like so many waxen cups. Children are fond of the bilberry, or hurtleberry, as it is often called; and, in some of the northern counties, this fruit is sold in the markets for tarts. The people of Devonshire eat the berries with their rich clotted cream; and they are also the autumnal food of the moorfowl. They are taken both in Poland and the Scottish islands as medicine. This species is abundant on many heaths and woodlands, but is very local, and, sometimes, is not found over half a county.

Of still lower growth than this, and scarcely more than a foot high, is the red whortleberry,

or cowberry (*V. Vitis-Idæa*), which we can hardly call a shrub, though it wears its green leaves all the winter through, and its stem does not die away. Its foliage much resembles that of the garden-box, and its flesh-coloured flowers are found in May and June. The berries are not so well flavoured as those of the common bilberry, but in Derbyshire, they are used for tarts. They are stated by Linnæus to be sent, in great quantities, from West Bothnia to Stockholm, for pickling. The Swedes, too, use a jelly with all kinds of roast meat, and the cowberry jelly is considered superior to that of the red currant. This plant also serves, in Norway, the purpose of the box, and is used as an edging to the garden plot.

One of the loveliest flowers of May, and one which adorns the hedges in greatest profusion, is the stitchwort (*Stellaria Holostea*). It is, in most parts of England, a very common flower, and is the companion of the violet and primrose in the May copse and hedge. It grows most plentifully on loamy soils. It was formerly called white-flowered grass, or all-bones, though it is one of the most delicate and tender plants in its structure. It is very brittle, and often

said to have no root; but the fact is, that the stem is so frail, that on attempting to pull up the root, it separates itself just above the fibre, leaving that in the ground. The flower is white as the driven snow, and not much smaller than a primrose. Then the periwinkle (*Vinca major*) lends its graces to the May hedge, throwing its bright blue flowers on bush or bramble, and its large glossy leaves, glistening in the sun with so bright a green as to deserve its name of little laurel, by which it was formerly known.

Springing from out the crevices of the wall, and throwing its many leaves and blossoms over the grey ruin, the ivy-leaved toad-flax (*Linaria Cymbalaria*) is now very frequent. It may easily be described. Its blossoms are shaped like those of the snap-dragon, of a delicate lilac, marked with a small portion of yellow; and the leaves are thick and fleshy, and have their under surfaces coloured with a purplish crimson hue. It is often hung up in a flower-pot from the cottage ceiling, and the long stems hang down all around it. It sometimes, too, mingles with the house-leek and stone-crops which grow upon the cottage roof. The wall-pellitory (*Parietaria officinalis*) is now

in blossom on old castles, churches, and walls. It was formerly called *perdiceum*, because partridges are said to feed upon it; and the housewives of old times knew it by the name of *vittraria*, "because" says an old writer, "it serveth to scour glasses, pipkins, and such like."

Several very rough-leaved plants bloom during this month, and are much allied to each other, not only by their prickly foliage, but by their medicinal properties. The small alkanet (*Anchusa arvensis*), with its bright blue flowers, is not uncommon in corn-fields and on hedge-banks. Every hair, or bristle, on its leaves is seated on a white tubercle, and is very strong and sharp. The flowers of this plant are particularly attractive to bees, and the roots contain a great quantity of mucilage. With us, this flower is little used; but in China, where it is abundant, the roots form an important medicine. Another species (*Anchusa tinctoria*) was formerly used for painting the face, by ladies who were not content with the beauty which God had given them; and it must have imparted a more permanent stain than the rouge of modern times. It is still

cultivated in the south of France for its red dye, and is used by druggists for colouring various salves, and by vintners for adulterating port wine.

Most closely allied to this plant, though blooming some months later in the year, is the common borage (*Borago officinalis*), which grows on waste places, and on heaps of rubbish, and which bears beautiful blue flowers. It has been discovered by a chemist that a decoction of the leaves of this plant, evaporated to a syrup, and kept for some days, yields salt crystals, partly in form of needles, and partly cubical; and that the needle crystals were found to be perfect nitre, and the cubical ones sea salt. If a dried piece of this plant be held in a flame, it emits, while burning, a kind of coruscation, accompanied by a slight detonation. This is caused by the nitre which it contains, and which renders it suitable for match-paper, of which it is sometimes an ingredient. We see something of those small sparks in burning the dried stalks of lavender; and one of our wild reed plants—the great cat's tail (*Typha latifolia*)—will produce a flash of light if a candle be held near it.





Hare's-ear. (*Bupleurum rotundifolium*.)



Coriander. (*Coriandrum sativum*.)



The borage grows round about Aleppo in such profusion as to attract the attention of travellers; and its flowers are, in the east, larger and of a deeper blue than ours. This plant was once thought to strengthen the frame, and give courage and spirit to those who partook of it. The old English bowl, called a cool tankard, and made of cider, lemon-juice, and water, was considered to derive its refreshing powers from the borage-blossoms which were steeped in it; and as may easily be ascertained, they certainly possess the power of imparting coolness to liquid. Any part of the plant will also give its peculiar flavour to water in which it is placed; though few, perhaps, would relish its strong taste. The leaves are very rough, but, when young, are sometimes eaten as salads; and were once highly esteemed as improving the flavour of cresses and chervil. Indeed the borage was, with the rue and rosemary, gathered not only for present use, but was stored by the prudent housewife against the season when the fresh plants were not to be procured; and, like the two former, was praised for that it kept "seeming and savour all the winter long." "Those

of our time," says an old writer, "doe use the flowers in salads, to exhilarate and make the mind be glad. There be also many things made of them, used everywhere for the comfort of the heart, for the driving away of sorrow."

Another very rough-leaved plant, the comfrey (*Symphytum officinale*), is now in blossom, chiefly by the river-sides, or other moist grounds. It has clusters of yellowish white drooping bells, and the leaves are so rough that they cannot be touched by the naked hand with impunity. The root, which abounds in mucilage, is much valued by villagers, who use it as medicine. The lungwort (*Pulmonaria officinalis*) is showing its purple bells with their young pink buds in the woods. The rough foliage is spotted like the animal lungs, and hence it was inferred that it was designed to be useful in pulmonary complaints. It was formerly called sage of Bethlehem, and spotted comfrey, and is known in France as *l'herbe aux poumons*.

On field-borders, commons, and other waste lands, the pea-shaped blossoms of the rest-harrow (*Ononis spinosa*) are, by the end of the

month, covering the spiny stems. This pea-like blossom is called by botanists, *papilionaceous*, or butterfly-shaped; and as it is always found that plants whose flowers are of this form, bear their seeds in a legume, or pod, they are also termed leguminous. The structure is remarked by Dr. Paley, as a beautiful instance of contrivance on the part of the great Creator of the universe. After having adverted to the importance of preserving from injury the parts of fructification in a plant, which are usually lodged in the centre of a blossom, he says, "The pea, or *papilionaceous* tribe, inclose these parts within a beautiful folding of the internal blossom, sometimes called, from its shape, the boat, or keel, itself also protected under a penthouse formed of the external petal. This structure is very artificial, and what adds to the value of it, though it may diminish the curiosity, very general. It has also this farther advantage, and it is an advantage strictly mechanical, that all the blossoms turn their backs to the wind whenever the gale blows strongly enough to endanger the delicate parts on which the seed depends. I have observed this a hundred times, in a field of peas in blossom.

It is an aptitude which results from the figure of the flower, and as we have said, is strictly mechanical, as much so as the turning of a weather-board, or tin cap, upon the top of a chimney."

The flowers of the rest-harrow are usually pink, but sometimes white, and the plant is usually very spiny, but the number of spines seems affected by the nature of the soil on which it grows. On calcareous soils these prickly appendages are few and small; while on the plants which flourish on a soil whose substratum is gravel, they are very strong and sharp.

On similar places to that on which the rest-harrow flourishes, the low juniper is often found. The common juniper (*Juniperus communis*) now bears its bloom. In England, it grows on sandy, or chalky soils, or on open downs; but it is a plant common to the whole of Northern Europe, and, in some countries, is abundant on high mountains. In Sweden and Norway, it is applied to a variety of domestic purposes. In Norway—that land of good housewifery—the bowls of the dairy are daily washed with a decoction of the juniper branch,



which is remarkably effectual in keeping them sweet. Then the Norwegian dame strews the young tops of the juniper over her floors, as our country people strew the sand on theirs; and the juniper is regularly sold in the streets for this use.

When about to consign to the dust the remains of the dead, the juniper twigs are scattered plentifully from their houses to the church-yard, and a number of its green sprigs thrown on and around the grave; and the twigs may be seen lying on many a tomb, still keeping their greenness long after they were strewn there by the hand of love and friendship. The Swedes make a conserve of the berries, and eat it in their meals: they also drink juniper beer, and take the plant medicinally. In Germany, the berries are used to flavour the *sauer kraut*, which is so unpalatable a dish to all but Germans; and in that land they are burned in sick rooms and hospitals for the purpose of fumigation. In our country, they are chiefly used for giving the flavour to gin, and large quantities are imported from Holland, Germany, and Italy, for making this liquor. The juniper bush is, with us, low

and small, seldom so large as the furze; but where it attains some size, the wood is very firm and compact. In former times, spits and drinking vessels were made of it, as it was thought to impart a pleasant flavour to meat or liquid. The sandarach, or pounce, which is used to strew over manuscripts, is made from a gum which oozes from the old juniper plants.

We read in the first book of Kings, xix. 4, that the prophet Elijah lay and slept "under a juniper tree;" but the word so translated is thought by recent commentators to be a species of broom. Three kinds of juniper, however, are said by Kitto, in the *Pictorial Palestine*, to be common in the Holy Land. "On Mount Hor," on which Aaron died, says this writer, "and where his tomb is still honoured, it grows even to the summit; nor is it wanting in the renowned valley below, in which the metropolis of Seir is entombed." Many writers think that one species of juniper (*Juniperus oxycedrus*) rather than that of the so-called cedar of Lebanon, is the cedar wood so famed, in former times, for its durability, and of which statues were made before the use of marble





Dog-wood. (*Cornus sanguinea*.)



Mistletoe. (*Viscum album*.)

was introduced. The wood of our common juniper is said to burn so well, that a fire made of juniper boughs may, by constant replenishing, be kept burning for twelve months, without the addition of any other fuel.

Though our juniper grows low on the ground, yet some species of juniper attain, in other climates, the height of trees, and afford a welcome shade from the sun. Both Lady Sale and Lieutenant Eyre describe the refreshment which they experienced, when they and their fellow-captives reposed under the shadow of the juniper arbours, during their melancholy imprisonment in Afghanistan; and the people of Syria often sit in groups around the trunk of the juniper, delighting in the shade of its green and fragrant boughs.

Under hedges, by the side of meadows, and in thickets on high situations especially, the bitter vetch (*Orobus tuberosus*) is not uncommon. This plant has pea-shaped blossoms of a pinkish purple colour, and marked with purple veins. The flowers are on long stalks, and the stem, which is about a foot high, has three or four pairs of leaflets. This flower is very common in Surrey. In the highlands of

Scotland it is also abundant, and is much valued by the Highlanders on account of its tuberous root, which has the flavour of liquorice, and is called by them *Cormeille*. These roots they dry, and chew with their liquor, in order to improve its flavour. They also consider that a very small quantity of the *cormeille* will enable them to repel hunger and thirst for many hours. In some parts of Scotland, the roots are bruised and made into a fermented liquor. They are very nutritive, and have been used, when boiled, both in England and Scotland, as food in times of scarcity. In Holland and Flanders, they are commonly roasted as chestnuts, and have a very similar flavour to that of this fruit; yet in our country they are scarcely known to be of any value, and are quite neglected by villagers, though the flower is often gathered for the wild nosegay. It is known by the names of wood-pea and heath-pea, and, in Scotland, generally called by the name of *knapperts*.

During this month and the next, a number of vetches and vetchlings come into flower. They may be generally described as plants with butterfly-shaped blossoms, mostly of a



purple, or red colour, though a few of them have yellow flowers. They have slender leaves, and twining, or straggling stems, some of them with tendrils. The pretty crimson vetchling, or grass-vetch (*Lathyrus Nissolia*), with its slender grass-like leaves, is in bloom this month, on the green borders of fields ; and the common vetch (*Vicia sativa*) is not unfrequent now on roads and pastures ; but these are difficult to describe without the use of botanical terms.

Several species of vetch yield good herbage for cattle ; and as they all have legumes, or pods, full of seeds, they afford food for birds. The vetches were formerly called fetches ; thus, in Milton's *Comus*, the lines which now stand

"If all the world  
Should, in a fit of temperance, feed on pulse,"

stood originally, "feed on fetches."

The red pottage, for which the weary hunter, Esau, sold his birthright to his brother Jacob, was made of the seed of a species of vetch, or tare, the lentil (*Ervum lens*). The lentil is still highly prized in eastern lands ; and in Egypt, and throughout Syria, the bean is parched in frying-pans, and sold in shops. The mess of red pottage is still an esteemed

dish, as it was when Esau coveted it, and sinned by undervaluing his birthright, in order to procure it;<sup>1</sup> and it is now, as it was then, a very important article of diet to the labouring classes, and often cooked, too, for the rich. Dr. Shaw relates, that “lentiles dissolve easily, in boiling, into a mass, and form a pottage of a red, or chocolate colour, much valued in Egypt and Western Asia.” The yellow flowers of the plant called familiarly kidney vetch, or lady’s finger (*Anthyllis Vulneraria*), are blooming on dry pastures by the latter end of this month, and continue in bloom till August. These flowers grow in heads, or clusters, two clusters on each stem, and may be known from any other of our papilionaceous plants by the quantity of white silky wool in which they lie as in a nest. The flower, which, in Kent and most other counties, is always yellow, grows in Devonshire, and in Wales, with cream-coloured, white, or red blossoms. Linnæus observed of this plant, that in Oeland, where the soil is a red calcareous clay, the flowers are red; but that on the white chalky soil of Gothland, they are white.

<sup>1</sup> Gen. xxv. 31, 34.

From every hedge we may now gather the flower called treacle mustard (*Erysimum Cheiranthoides*). It grows to the height of two or three feet, has small white flowers of the shape termed by botanists, cruciferous, and forming a cross, like those of the wallflower. The leaves are as large as those of the nettle; and, when broken, yield a most powerful odour of garlic, which renders the plant very offensive in a nosegay, and which even scent the dried specimens in an herbarium. It was formerly cultivated in kitchen gardens, as a salad plant.

A large number of yellow cruciferous flowers, as the wild cabbage (*Brassica oleracea*), the coleseed (*Brassica Napus*), the turnip (*Brassica Rapa*), and the two kinds of mustard, now show themselves among the young shoots of the green corn-field; and in neglected fields, threaten destruction to the blade. The charlock (*Brassica Sinapis*) is, too, common on the cultured land, and gives much trouble to the farmer. Its seeds are pungent and acrid; and are often mixed with those of the species cultivated especially for mustard. It is called in the different counties charlock, garlock, or chadlock; and in Yorkshire is commonly known

as runsh. The foliage is rough, and the flowers large and yellow. The kind chiefly planted for the table condiment, is the black, or common mustard (*Brassica nigra*), which is also a wild flower on waste places ; but the seeds of all the species are hot ; and afford, on expression, a pungent oil ; or when dried, a stimulating powder. Our word mustard, and the French word *moutarde*, are corruptions of the words *mustem ardens* (hot must), as the French prepare the mustard used at their tables with the sweet must of new wine.

All the plants which have cross-shaped flowers, contain, in greater or less degree, the acrid, volatile, oily principle, which is so abundant in the mustard-seed, and the root of the horse-radish ; and is less perceptible in the common wall-flower, or the water-cress. In all cases, cruciferous plants may be eaten with safety ; but, in many instances, the acrid principle must be reduced by culture, or by blanching, before they become palatable. When the texture of a cruciferous plant is very succulent and juicy, it is always eatable ; as in the case of the common cabbage-leaf, and in the radish, or turnip.

The sight of any of our numerous wild mustard plants will often suggest to the reader of Scripture the words of our Saviour, "The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard-seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field; which indeed is the least of all seeds; but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree; so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof."<sup>1</sup> A great variety of opinion has been entertained as to the species intended in this text. The black mustard is now usually considered to be the Scripture mustard. It is very common in Palestine, and very similar in its appearance to our charlock. The warmth of the climate, however, renders it far more luxuriant; and it attains the height of a shrub, or even a tree; but as it has not a woody stem, or branches, and it dies down to the ground every winter, it can scarcely be called a tree.

Here again, we must refer to that valuable work, the *Pictorial Palestine*. The author of this book quotes from the travels of Captains Irby and Mangles. Speaking of vegetable productions in the neighbourhood of the Dead Sea,

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xiii. 31, 32.

these travellers say, "There was one curious tree, which we observed in great plenty; and which bears a fruit in bunches, resembling in appearance the currant, with the colour of the plum. It has a pleasant, although strongly aromatic taste, exactly resembling mustard; and, if taken in any quantity, produces a similar irritability of the nose and eyes, to that which is caused by taking mustard. The leaves of the tree have the same pungent flavour as the fruit, although not so strong. We think it probable that this is the tree our Saviour alluded to, in the parable of the mustard-seed, and not the plant we have in the north: for although, in our journey from Byzan to Adjeloun, we met with the mustard plant growing wild, as high as our horses' heads; still, being an annual, it did not deserve the appellation of a tree; whereas the other is really such, and birds might easily, and actually do, take shelter under its shadow." Kitto, commenting on this quotation, remarks, "The Jewish writers speak of a mustard-tree common among them, in quite corresponding terms; seeming to show that a species of the *Brassica* or some analogous genus, existed in Palestine, with which we are not well acquainted;





Dyer's Madder. (*Rubia tinctorum*.)



Valerian. (*Valeriana officinalis*.)



and which may very probably prove to be that which Captain Mangles has pointed out."

One of our wild species of mustard, the broad hedge mustard, or London rocket (*Sisymbrium Irio*), is exceedingly common on waste grounds, in the neighbourhood of the metropolis; and is remarkable as having sprung up immediately after the great fire of London, in 1666, and quickly covered the ground where the city had stood. So profuse was this flower, in a few weeks after the fire, that it was supposed by the botanists of those days, that a greater quantity existed on that one spot, than could have been collected from over the whole surface of Europe; and it is a singular instance of vegetable growth, for which no naturalist has ever been able to account.

A peculiar circumstance connected with a flower of this, and the coming month, is, that it has bloomed for centuries on a lone place in the sea, and is almost unknown as a wild flower in every other part of England; this is the wild peony (*Pæonia corallina*), which lifts its red blossom on the island in the Severn, called Steep Holmes. It is stated by Gerarde, to have been found, in his time, near Gravesend; but if

it grew there in those days, it has disappeared since. The Rev. W. Lisle Bowles thus notices it:—

“The cliff abrupt and high,  
And desolate, and cold, and bleak, uplifts  
Its barren brow! barren; but on its steep  
One native flower is seen—the peony—  
One flower which smiles in sunshine and in storm.  
There still companionless, but yet not sad,  
She has no sister of the summer field,  
None to rejoice with her, when spring returns.  
None, that in sympathy may bend its head  
When evening winds blow hollow o’er the rock  
In autumn’s gloom!”

This flower is distinguished by the name of the entire-leaved peony, because its leaves, unlike those of the garden species, have straight uncut edges; the blossoms too are single.

The dark purple flag, or iris (*Iris fætidissima*), called, when planted by gardeners, the gladwyn iris, may be found in May and June, on meadow lands and in thickets, in the south and west of England. In Devonshire it is a very common flower; it is not unfrequent in some parts of Kent. In the northern and midland counties, it is rare, and has not been known to grow wild in Scotland. This flower has a strong odour of roast beef; the leaves and roots steeped in beer, are taken as a medicine.





Ox-eye Daisy. (*Chrysanthemum Leucanthemum*.)

Colt's-foot. (*Tussilago Farfara*.)



One or two species of *Lychnis* are now in bloom; and in meadows and corn-fields, the bright flowers of the red lychnis, or campion (*Lychnis dioica*), are very common. This is a flower shaped a little like that of the primrose, but the stem, when on moist lands, often rises two or three feet in height. There are many species of wild lychnis; one is very commonly known, from its jagged petals, by the name of ragged robin, or cuckoo flower (*Lychnis flos-cuculi*); it is frequent by streams, and its pink flowers are very similar to those of the common garden *Clarkia*. It is also called bachelor's buttons, because, as Gerarde says, "the similitude which these flowers have to the jagged cloth buttons, anciently worn in this kingdom, gave occasion to our gentlewomen, and other lovers of flowers, in those times, to call them bachelor's buttons."

The flower called golden saxifrage (*Chrysosplenium oppositifolium*) is now in bloom by river sides; and several of the true saxifrages, of which Hooker gives twelve British species, are in flower during this month. The golden saxifrage is remarkable for its medicinal virtues, and is much esteemed as a salad, in the Vosges,

where it is termed *Cresson de roche*. Several species of saxifrage grow on rocks or stones ; one very common kind is often found on old walls, this is the rue-leaved saxifrage (*Saxifraga tridactylites*), which flowers in May ; it has small white blossoms, and the leaves and stems are covered with thick viscid hairs. The white meadow saxifrage (*Saxifraga granulata*) is not uncommon now in meadows and on hedge-banks ; it has a much larger flower than the last species, and is remarkable for its stem, which carries a number of small bulbs, close to the base, and of so bright a red as to resemble a string of coral beads. But the best known species is the flower called London pride, or none-so-pretty, which is so often the ornament of the cottage garden border, and which, perhaps, received the former name because it will grow on the little soil which borders the paved yards of the city, and is uninjured by smoke or fog. In Ireland, it is called St. Patrick's cabbage, and its old name of " Queen Anne's needlework " is expressive of its flower, which resembles a most beautiful embroidery, and well repays examination with a microscope.

The flowers of May may be concluded with

some account of a plant, so fragrant and useful, that although it has not ornamental blossoms, its flowers forming a little catkin, yet it well deserves the notice of all who value our wild plants. The sweetgale, or Dutch myrtle (*Myrica Gale*), grows on boggy, or moory grounds; its fragrance resembles that of a myrtle, but is much more powerful, and not only scents the air while growing, but, when gathered, perfumes the room. The Highlanders lay its branches in their linen chests, to scent their clothes, and to drive away the moth. The Welsh place it under their beds; and, in some parts of Scotland, it is strewed with the heather for the nightly couch. In Sweden it is used for a variety of purposes; a dye is made from it, and a common medicine, and it serves instead of hops to give the preserving principle to beer; but it is less wholesome than the hop. In some parts where this plant is common it is used for brooms, and in the Isle of Ely, it is so very abundant, that it is burned instead of common faggots.

The sweetgale is generally considered much like the myrtle in appearance; but the lighter green of its leaves, and the more crowded growth of the stem, lessen the resemblance.

Like that plant, it is a small shrub. It is plentiful in Devonshire, and is commonly called the Devonshire myrtle ; it grows in quantities on the dreary Dartmoor. When the sweet-gale is boiled, a kind of wax, like bees' wax, rises to the surface of the water, and may be collected in large pieces. Tapers are sometimes made of this wax, and are so fragrant while burning, that they are very agreeable and salutary in a sick room. These candles are so much used in Prussia, that they are burned constantly in the royal household. The berry is about the size of a pea, and has, both when fresh and dried, a most grateful perfume.

The pretty little barrenwort (*Epimedium alpinum*, Pl. 3) is a member of the barberry family, and has been found in several places ; but appears now to be extinct as Hooker does not include it. It is a native of the Tyrol. The alpine buckthorn (*Rhamnus alpina*, Pl. 12), a genus of which we have two species, comes from Switzerland. The wood of our berry-bearing alder (*R. Frangula*) is used for gunpowder. The flesh-coloured heath (*Erica herbacea*, Pl. 27) is a native of Europe ; but the flowers resemble those of our heaths.



Giant Bell-flower. (*Campanula latifolia*.)

Arnica. (*Arnica montana*.)





## JUNE

Prolific vegetation—Pond-weeds—Aquatic vegetables—Water Flag—Fleur-de-luce—Forget-me-not—Bulrush—Flowering Rush—Water Violet—Bog Bean—Birdsfoot Trefoil—Honeysuckle—Wayfaring Tree—Cotton-tree—Bladder Campion—Convolvulus—Yellow Agrimony—Yellow Avens—Globe Flower—Hound's tongue—Yellow Rattle—Dwarf Red Rattle—Butterwort—Cinquefoil—Viper's Bugloss—Corn Gromwell—Red Poppy—White Poppy—Phenomenon of Red Flowers—Phosphorescent light in Roots—Corn-cockle—Pimpernel—Flax—Stonecrop—Orpine—Nettle—Shepherd's Needle—Foxglove—Burnet—Mallows—Bitter Sweet—Sweethrier Rose—Burnet-leaved Rose—Trailing Dog Rose—Broom—Dyer's Weed

THE present month has a different character from that of the last. The flowers are even more numerous, the leaves thicker, the grass and foliage of a deeper green. Spring has quite yielded to summer. Nature, too, wears a calmer and more settled aspect; and, at noontime, on a June day, the birds sing but little, and few sounds are heard in the wood, save the humming of that busy little chemist, the bee, which is distilling honey from the

flowers. And now, on the open land, we see that clear trembling vapour, which the Scripture describes as "the clear heat upon herbs," and which quivers and dances in the sunshine till the eye aches with gazing upon it.

There is no month in the year in which the early morning and evening are more delightful than in this. It is in June that we see the appropriateness of the beautiful simile of the psalmist, when he spoke of the "Hope of Israel:" "He shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain."<sup>1</sup> "He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass; as showers that water the earth."<sup>2</sup>

Every part of a rural landscape in June is profuse in leaves and flowers. Even the surface of the stream is covered over with the green leaves of various plants. The white crowfoot still adorns the silver current; the duckweeds (*Lemna*), which consist of thick and succulent green pieces, like leaves—called by botanists *fronds*—and of threads which descend from them, and hang floating in the water, form a thick

<sup>1</sup> 2 Sam. xxiii. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Psa. lxxii. 6.

herbage on the stagnant pool. The ducks and waterfowl, as they glide among it, gather plentiful meals from its juicy substance, and innumerable insects find a covert under it. The lesser species (*Lemna minor*) is very common, and has small compact fronds, very thick in their texture, and slightly convex beneath. It grows so rapidly, as sometimes to be a troublesome plant in the pond. Another species, *L. trisulca*, the so-called ivy-leaved duckweed, branches on one or both sides, the young fronds being placed crosswise. It is not so common. The flowers of the duckweed are so inconspicuous, that few would observe them, and the greater duckweed (*Lemna polyrhiza*), though sometimes covering our ponds with its purple fronds, is not known to flower in Britain.

Several species of the plant, called pondweed (*Potamogeton*), are now wearing their green flowers, which rise above the water, while the whole of the foliage is immersed or floats on the surface of streams, looking as beautiful as the delicate green seaweeds which lie in the ocean. These plants are often very thick in the pools, and when the current is slow, are sometimes several feet in length; but they

grow in the Swiss lakes so much larger and thicker, that they look like large woods under the water, and are frequently twenty fathoms in length. Like other aquatic plants, they shelter many animals, and swans and ducks are very fond of them.

Loudon quotes Professor Martyn's observation on water plants generally, that the "respiration of these truly aquatic vegetables must be different from those which inhale atmospheric air, as the breathing of fishes is from that of birds." "Accordingly," adds this writer, "they are of a different texture, pellucid, like oiled paper, harsh and ribbed, but often very brittle; and their surfaces, like that of aquatic animals, destitute of down, or hair of any kind." This remark applies to those plants which live wholly in the water, and not fully to those which grow to some height above its surface.

Waving its bright yellow flowers above the stream, and forming in and around it a thick green mass, with its sword-like leaves, the yellow iris (*Iris Pseud-acorus*) is a beautiful flower in June. It is often called flag-sedge, and corn-flag, and, in Scotland, is named water-skegs. The French term it *la flambe aquatique*.

Country people value its long acrid root as a cure for the tooth-ache. It is also used for dyeing a black colour, and for making ink, and is dried and ground for snuff. Its juice is made into a cosmetic, and its seeds roasted for coffee. This flower is sometimes found in moist woods. It will grow very well in a garden.

We have but two wild species of iris, and the other was named on a preceding page. Our common purple iris is the *fleur de luce*, and it derives the name from Louis VII., King of France, who, when setting forth on his crusade to the Holy Land, chose this flower as his heraldic emblem. *Fleur de luce* is merely a corruption of *fleur de Louis*, and it is now more often called *fleur de lis*, or lily flower.

The forget-me-not, or water scorpion-grass (*Myosotis palustris*), is in blossom in June, and continues flowering till August. Two or three of our wild flowers are occasionally honoured with this sentimental name. In Queen Elizabeth's time, it was often applied to the ground pine, a small yellow flower found on sandy banks, or gravelly fields, with its blossoms so hidden among a profusion of leaves, as somewhat to resemble a pine. In our days the germander

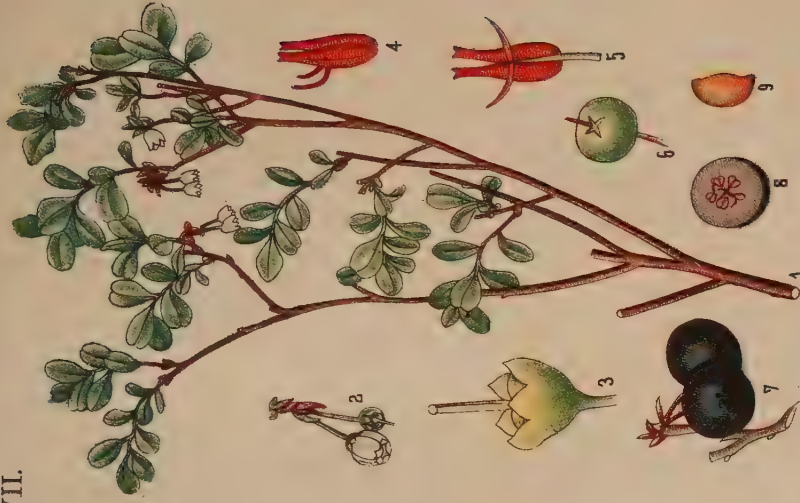
speedwell is sometimes designated as the forget-me-not ; but it is seldom so called by persons well acquainted with flowers, and it probably originates in its being mistaken for the myosotis. Whether the species of myosotis which grows in the fields (*Myosotis arvensis*), the small brilliant blossom of which looks like a cluster of blue turquoise, or the large kind, which grows on the stream, be the true olden forget-me-not, may be disputed. Botanists, however, in France, Germany, and England, seem to agree that it is the latter kind.

The water scorpion-grass grows plentifully in most country streams. Its long cluster of pinkish-coloured buds, bending nearly into a circular form, before expanding, procured for all the species their name of scorpion-grass. Our forefathers, acting upon their usual principles of analogies, inferred, from the shape of the young shoots, that it was a remedy against the bites of scorpions ; under which name they seem to have included snakes, adders, and various other reptiles. The old legend of the knight who was drowned, while attempting to gather for a lady some of the flowers from a stream in which the current was rapid, and





Flesh-coloured Heath. (*Erica herbacea*.)



Bog-Whortleberry. (*Vaccinium uliginosum*.)



whose dying words are said to have given the name to the flower, must now yield to an apparently more authentic account of its origin.

Miss Strickland, in her work on the Queens of England, has given us a statement of the cause of the name, forget-me-not, scarcely less poetical than that which has, for centuries, been sung by poets of all the lands of Europe. Speaking of Henry of Lancaster, she says, "This royal adventurer—the banished and aspiring Lancaster—appears to have been the person who gave to the *Myosotis arvensis*, or forget-me-not, its emblematical and poetical meaning, by uniting it at the period of his exile, on his collar of S. S., with the initial letter of his *mot*, or watchword, *Souveigne vous de moy*: thus rendering it the symbol of remembrance, and, like the subsequent fatal roses of York, and Lancaster, and Stuart—the lily of Bourbon, and the violet of Napoleon—an historical flower. Few of those, who, at parting, exchange this simple touching appeal to memory, are aware of the fact, that it was first used as such by a royal Plantagenet prince, who was, perhaps, indebted to the agency of the mystic blossom for the crown of England. It was

with his hostess, at that time wife of the Duke of Bretagne, that Henry exchanged this token of good-will and remembrance."

"Can the rush grow up without mire? can the flag grow without water?" was the question of the patriarch Job; and as, in his day, the rushes and sedges crowded by the edge of the river, so it is now. Their long thin leaves form islets on the stream, or fringe its border with their greenness; and as a wind sweeps over the current, and ruffles it into waves, we are reminded of the denouncement, made by the prophet, to the wife of the wicked Jeroboam, "The Lord shall smite Israel, as a reed is shaken in the water."

The tall bulrush, or clubrush (*Scirpus lacustris*), is now growing up; and, by the end of the month, bears its brown and fringed head. Its stems are much used for mats and chairs, and are gathered by country people for sale. The spongy stems are also useful to coopers, for filling up the crevices in casks; cottages are often thatched with them; and when pasturage is scarce, they are eaten by cattle. The salt marsh rush (*Scirpus maritimus*), and several other species, flower by the end of May.

The roots of the latter kind are eaten in times of scarcity. The *Pi-tsi*, or water-chestnut, which the Chinese cultivate in tanks, and value as a dessert, is allied to our mares-tail. It is dried in the sun, and is eaten either boiled, or uncooked.

In former times, when rushes supplied the place of modern carpets, and when the ground over which the bride walked to the altar was strewn with their leaves, the sweet-flag (*Acorus Calamus*) was much sought for these purposes, and well suited to them, by its fragrant leaf. The custom of strewing floors on festival days is still retained at Norwich; and the old cathedral is, on certain days, scented with the perfume of the sweet flag, profusely strewn over its floors. This plant is abundant in the fenny districts of England. The root is—especially when dried—so powerfully aromatic, as that it might be used instead of spice, for dishes. The Turks make a sweetmeat of this root, and think it valuable as a preservative against the plague. The sweet flag root, which is sold by druggists, is imported from the Levant; but our native species is quite as aromatic as that which is brought from afar. It is one of the oldest

medicines known, and is much used in the present day. Linnæus says, that it is the only native aromatic plant of northern climates; the hot spices of foreign lands being invariably the product of the plants grown in the hot regions of the world.

The lovely flowering rush (*Butomus umbellatus*), often called water-gladiole, is now in bloom. The old writers termed it "grassie rush;" and one of them says, "It is of all others the fairest and most pleasant to behold, and serveth very well for the decking and trimming-up of houses, because of the beautie and braverie thereof." Its flowers grow in a cluster at the summit of its stem, and are of a delicate rose-colour, tinged with purple. The sharp edges of the leaves cut like a razor, and often wound the mouths of cattle.

That beautiful aquatic flower, the water-violet, or feather-foil (*Hottonia palustris*), is a great ornament to streams, but it is, in some counties, very rare. Its white thread-like roots sink deep into the soil, at the bottom of the pond, and its leaves are all under water. The flowers rise above the stream on a stem about a foot long; and their handsome clusters are



either of a pale lilac or white colour. It affords a covert to several small shell-fish; among others, to the fresh-water periwinkle. It is to be regretted that it is not more general, as it is easily cultivated; for if the seeds be thrown one summer into the stream, the flowers will appear in the ensuing season.

On the marshy sides of the river, grows that very pretty flower, the buck-bean, or bog-bean (*Menyanthes trifoliata*). It may easily be known by its triple-leaf, resembling in colour and shape that of the field bean. Its flowers grow in bunches, and are white, tipped with red, and most beautifully bordered with a delicate fringe. Its roots are so numerous, and so matted, that on bogs on which this plant grows in plenty, the ground is rendered firm by their interlacing. It contains a bitter principle, and is used by the Swedes instead of hops. The roots, when ground to flour, are eaten by the Laplanders, but form a poor food.

But quitting the river side for the green lanes and fields, we find nature equally profuse. The bird's-foot trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*), with its pretty yellow papilionaceous blossoms, is scattered all over the mead, scarcely taller than

the grass, but not hidden by it. Every hedge is now white with the flowers of the privet (*Ligustrum vulgare*), a plant which is green all the year, and, in winter, is covered with its numerous purple berries, which the birds leave untouched on the trees, and which are used by dyers. The honeysuckle (*Lonicera Periclymenum*) mingles its sweet breath with that of the hay-field. On calcareous and limestone soils, the flowers of the wayfaring tree (*Viburnum Lantana*) are a very conspicuous feature of the hedgerow. This plant is also called the mealy guelder rose, and it is well named by Mrs. Howitt, the wild hydrangea, for its general appearance is very similar to that of the garden plant. Its young shoots are covered with a cottony down, and its stems and leaves are thick and heavy. Its flat bunches of scarlet berries turn black in drying, and are used for making ink. In the Crimea, the young shoots are valued for the tubes of tobacco-pipes; and in Germany, baskets are made of the pliable branches. This beautiful shrub is called, in Kent, the cotton tree.

The young shoots of the bladder campion (*Silene inflata*) peep up on the hedge-bank, as



Common Winter-green. (*Pyrola minor*.)

Yellow Bird's-nest. (*Monotropa hypopitys*.)



early as April, and, in this month, the flower is blooming. The shoots are of a pale green, and have a powerful odour of green peas; and they are sometimes gathered while young, and eaten at table. There is, however, a bitter flavour mingling with the sweet taste, which renders them less palatable than the green pea; but this flavour is quite removed by blanching. The plant is a common dish in several of the Mediterranean islands, and in Zante it is very general on the table in spring. In the year 1685, the injuries done by the swarms of locusts to the vegetation of the island of Minorca was so great, that the inhabitants were in a melancholy state of destitution, and were saved from starvation, entirely by means of this common wild flower.

The small bindweed or convolvulus (*Convolvulus arvensis*) hangs its delicate pink bells on the wheat-stalk, and the large white flowers of the larger bindweed (*Convolvulus sepium*) are winding among the bushes; and, by their side, sometimes springs the enchanter's nightshade, a plant with small pink flowers and heart-shaped leaves, found chiefly in damp and shady places.

The yellow agrimony (*Agrimonia Eupatoria*) blows both in June and July. The most frequent places of its growth are field-borders and road-sides. The flower has a sweet scent like that of an apricot, which is stronger when the plant is bruised; and, in early spring, before the appearance of the blossom, the root is also aromatic. Country people make much use of this plant both as an external application and a medicine. It was formerly extensively prescribed by physicians as a tonic, and considered by Dr. Hunter a valuable remedy in disorders of the skin. It is thought by some writers to be the flower called by the ancients, *argemon*; and Pliny says, it takes its name from Eupator, the "finder of it out, and hath a royal and princelie authoritie."

The yellow avens (*Geum urbanum*), though rare in Scotland, is so frequent in rural places in England as to have obtained many familiar names. It is called herb Bennet, star of the earth, goldy flower, and its oldest name was blessed herb. It probably received this because it was once much used by physicians as a febrifuge: Dr. Thornton thought highly of its virtue. It is a pretty flower, growing on a



branched stem, and has large leaves at the root. Its root is prized on account of its sweet odour, and, in several parts of England, is collected and laid in drawers and chests, to give its scent to linen. It is also put into wine or ale, to impart to it a spicy flavour, and a water is distilled from it. It is remarkable that when this flower grows in damp places, the root does not possess this peculiar aroma. The water avens (*Geum rivale*) is the only other wild species, and is a much larger and thicker plant than this, with its flowers each about the size of a shilling, and of a deep purplish orange colour.

In the northern counties of England, and in Scotland, especially in the neighbourhood of mountains, the large round yellow blossoms of the globe flower (*Trollius europæus*) are a very handsome ornament to the green lands. In the south, they deck our garden borders, but in Scotland, they are very general as wild flowers, and are called lucker-gowans, and cabbage-daisies. This is a common plant on all the chain of the Alps, and seems by universal consent, to be used on the Continent as a flower of which to make garlands, on all rural festive occasions,

and with which to dress houses on holidays. Miller says of the globe flower, "In Westmoreland, these flowers are collected with great festivity, by the youth of both sexes, at the beginning of June; about which time, it is usual to see them returning from the woods in an evening, to adorn their doors and cottages with wreaths and garlands."

The hound's tongue (*Cynoglossum officinale*) would attract our notice in the country lane, rather by its great number of leaves, than by its flowers. The dark crimson-brown tint of their blossoms is so rare among our wilding plants, that this alone may serve to distinguish it from others. This flower is altogether of a most sober aspect, and has nothing gay or bright about it. It rarely grows on pasture lands; but when it springs up there, the cattle most carefully avoid it. This is probably owing to its peculiar odour, which has been compared to that of mice.

The yellow rattle (*Rhinanthus crista-galli*) intrudes itself in many pastures, but is rather local. In some parts of Kent, it is almost unknown; but around Tunbridge Wells, the fields are full of it. In the summer of 1839, it



Plate XXIX.



Holly. (*Ilex Aquifolium*.)



Ash. (*Fraxinus excelsior*.)

was unusually abundant in Essex, and found on many lands on which it had never before appeared. It not only grows in the meadows, but even among the corn, and was a source of great annoyance to the Essex agriculturists. The newspapers of the county descanted on the unusual quantity of this plant; which was rendered the more troublesome, as it yields a great abundance of seeds. The country people of Essex had a remarkable prejudice against it, as they thought that its roots emitted some secretion of the plant, which burned the roots of the corn. This flower is about a foot high; the stem branched, and often spotted with purple. The plant is very conspicuous, when its flowers are over; for the flat seed-vessels are particularly large. When the seeds are ripe, they rattle in their large husks, whenever the wind blows, or they are shaken by the passing footstep; and when they rattle thus on the fields of Sweden, the peasant concludes that it is time to cut down his grass, and commence the labours of the hay field. This is not, however, a guide to the English farmer; for his hay is generally cut while the flower is in blossom, and is stacked by the time its seeds are ripened.

The dwarf red-rattle (*Pedicularis sylvatica*), and the taller red species (*Pedicularis palustris*), are both much prettier flowers than the yellow rattle. Their manner of growth, and the shape of their leaves, as well as the delicate rose-tint of their large blossoms, render them very ornamental, either to the heath-land, or the wet marshy ground, on which they are very abundant.

It is also on moist boggy soils that that lovely flower, the butterwort (*Pinguicula vulgaris*), now droops its head. The leaves are of a very unctuous nature, and are used to coagulate milk. The Laplanders and Swedes pour the milk, warm from the cow, or the reindeer, on these leaves, which gives to it the consistency of cream. They then strain it, and keep it for several days, when it acquires that acidity which seems very agreeable to the natives of the northern lands. One spoonful of this substance will have the same effect on a fresh quantity of milk; and thus this plant, which is very plentiful in these cold climates, is also very valuable to those who reside in them. The butterwort is more common in the north than in the south of England.



The large flowered species (*Pinguicula grandiflora*) blossoms in May, on marshy grounds, but is better known as a garden flower. "Few plants," says Dr. Hooker, "can exhibit a more beautiful appearance early in the year than a cluster of *Pinguicula grandiflora*, blossoming under the shelter of a common frame. It is a mass of large deep and rich purple-coloured flowers ; well contrasted by the pale, but bright tint of its leaves." A writer in the *Magazine of Natural History* says of the common butterwort (*Pinguicula vulgaris*), that, upon pulling up the plant from the earth somewhat roughly, "the flower-stalk, previously erect, began to bend itself backwards, and formed a more or less perfect segment of a circle. So also, if the specimen is placed in a botanical box, it will soon be found that the leaves have curled themselves backwards, and now conceal the root by their revolution."

The creeping cinquefoil (*Potentilla reptans*) weaves its tapestry of pretty leaves and yellow-velvet blossoms over the mead, or on the hedge-bank ; and now, too, we may find the smaller blossoms of the tormentils (*P. Tormentilla*), which are very nearly allied to the potentilla, and the

roots of which are used by the natives of the Orkneys and the Hebrides in tanning, and are considered to yield a better tanning material than even the bark of the oak. Loudon states, that in the isles of Tirey and Col, so much land has been destroyed by digging for these roots, that the inhabitants have been prohibited the use of them. In many countries, they are used for dyeing red.

And now, too, some of the flowers of the corn-field spring up, and tower above the daily lengthening corn. The viper's bugloss (*Echium vulgare*) is seen from a distance on the chalky hill, the barren wall, or the heap of rubbish; and too often on the corn-lands. Crabbe, when naming the wild flowers, which are so unwelcome in the sterile corn-fields near the sea, gives to the bugloss a prominent place :—

“Rank weeds which every art and care defy  
Reign o'er the land, and rob the blighted rye;  
Here thistles stretch their prickly arms afar,  
And to the ragged infant threaten war;—  
Here poppies, nodding, mock the hopes of toil,  
Here the blue bugloss paints the sterile soil :—  
Hardy and high above the slender sheaf  
The shining mallow waves her silky leaf:  
O'er the young shoot, the charlock throws a shade,  
And clasping tares cling round the sickly blade.”

That the bugloss “paints the sterile soil” is

very evident from its places of growth; yet Loudon says truly, it is perhaps the handsomest of our native flowers. About Cambridge, where the country, by its barren soil and stunted vegetation, reminds us of the sea-coast, the bugloss is very common, and is called by country people, cat's tail.

The foliage of this flower is so thickly beset with prickles, that even those animals, which, like the donkey, browse on the thistle-tops, shrink from its spiny leaves and stems; and Professor Martyn observes, that when the bees pause in their flight, to suck the honey from its rich blue bells, their delicate wings are torn, before they can make their escape from the plant. The same writer, speaking of its frequency in Cambridge, among the spring-corn, says, "that the agriculturists of that land, have remarked, that it appears most plentiful every third year, when the fields are quite blue with its flowers."

The general name of viper's bugloss is common to the plant in several countries of Europe. Thus the Spaniard calls it *herba de la vibora*; and the Frenchman *la viperine*; and it is amusing to trace the old fancies which led to

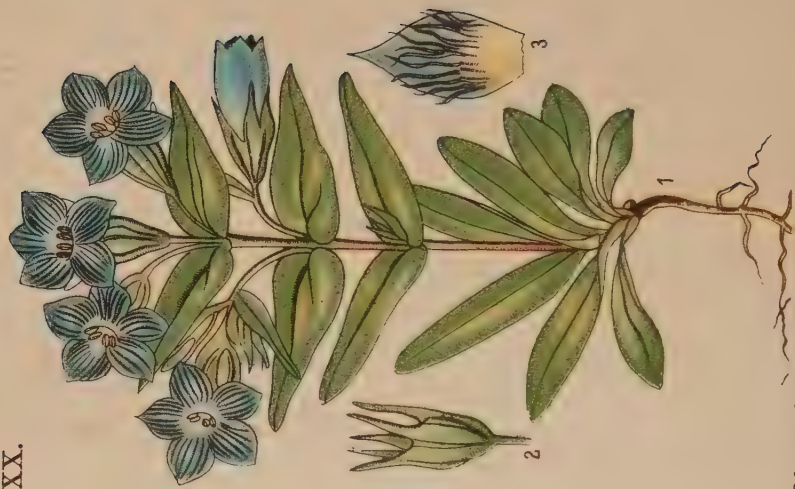
its being thus designated. The spotted stem resembles the skin of a snake, and the seeds are each like a viper's head; and our forefathers, who looked upon these marks as the signs of some corresponding virtues, inferred that the plant must heal the bite of a viper. On the same principle the consumptive patient hoped for relief from the lungwort because of its spotted leaves; and who, in those hopeful, trusting days, doubted that the pretty hepatica of the garden, with its lobed leaves, so like the liver, was created for the benefit of the sufferer under the gloomy liver complaint? In looking over the works on plants, written a few centuries ago, one might infer that snakes, vipers, and serpents abounded in our rural districts; and so many specific remedies are given against their bites, that surely none but the ignorant need have suffered from their effects.

The very sight of the viper's bugloss would, according to Gerarde, drive vipers away from the spot, and the seed of the larkspur had, he says, a still more powerful influence. "Its vertues," says he, "are so forcible, that the herbe only thrown before the scorpion, or any other venemous beast, causeth them to be without





Centaury. (*Erythraea Centaurium*.)



Obtuse-leaved Gentian. (*Gentiana obtusifolia*.)



force and strength to hurt ; insomuch that they cannot move or stir until the herbe be taken away." Yet Gerarde was a good botanist and an intelligent man, and these strange notions belonged rather to people of those times in general, than to an individual.

The corn gromwell (*Lithospermum arvense*), a plant about a foot high, with narrow-pointed leaves, covered with white hairs, and seeds hard as flint, is now very general in the corn-field ; and a plant called the shepherd's needle (*Scandix Pecten-veneris*) attracts observation by its peculiar seed-vessels. This plant is about a foot high, with clusters of very small white flowers. When the flowers die, they are succeeded by bunches of seed-vessels, so large that no one would suppose that they belong to so tiny a flower. The seed-vessels are often three or four inches in length, and they taper into a sharp point at the summit ; hence the rural name of the flower, which is also called Venus's comb. It is believed that this plant was eaten at table by the ancient Greeks.

Several poppies are in bloom during this month, and in the course of July, all our six wild species of this beautiful flower enliven the

fields. Ornamental as they are to the pastoral scenery, waving to and fro their large handsome heads, yet they are very annoying to the cultivator. The common red poppy (*Papaver Rhœas*), with its globular flower, is general in all parts of England, and sometimes called cheese-bowl, and head-ache. It is cultivated in Flanders, and several parts of Germany, for the sake of its seeds, from which an excellent oil is made, and used as a substitute for olive-oil.

The ancients had a very different opinion of the poppy from that entertained in modern days; for, instead of regarding it as injurious to the corn-field, they looked upon its gay petals as a trophy of triumph to the land-owner, since no corn was thought good which had not an admixture of the poppy: and when the reaper offered to Ceres his thank-offerings for a good harvest, the brown ears of corn and the seeds of the poppy served for an expression of his gratitude.

All the poppies possess the narcotic principle in a greater or less degree, and the opium poppy especially (*Papaver somniferum*) partakes it. It is now common in corn-fields. It is thought that this was derived by cultivation from (*Papaver*

*setigerum*), wild in South Europe. It is, in several eastern countries, cultivated for the purposes of opium. Upon breaking the stem of this flower it may easily be seen to contain a quantity of thick white milk ; and the opium is made by wounding the poppy-stem, and leaving the milk to harden in the sun. It is then formed into flat cakes, and covered with leaves, and in this state we receive it from the east. The Turks mingle in their opium-cakes a variety of syrups made from several fruits, and stamp these sweetmeats with the words "*Mash Allah*," the work of God. Alas, that pious words should have so little real meaning, and should be used as a sanction to that degrading intoxication, and destruction of bodily and mental faculties, which is the sad result of opium eating !

The opium poppy is planted in many fields of England for its seed-vessels, which are used in medicine and surgery. It was formerly called Joan silver pin.

Poppy seeds, in the east, are commonly sprinkled on the tops of cakes and sweetmeats. Several seeds are, indeed, used in this way, as we should use carraway-seeds, and even the bread is thus adorned with the seed of the

poppy or some other plant. The cracknels spoken of in the first book of Kings, when Jeroboam, who caused Israel to sin, sent them as a present to the prophet Ahijah, when he asked of the fate of his sick child, are supposed by Kitto to have been a kind of cake, sprinkled over in this way with poppy-seeds, as the original word implies a spotted cake.

Poppies are found in many countries of the temperate zones, while one is in tropical Australia. Brilliant as is our wild scarlet flower, it is much brighter in some other lands. In the corn-fields, in some parts of France, it has a much richer tint than in the English field.

An interesting phenomenon is sometimes exhibited by red and orange-coloured flowers, and also, in a less degree, by yellow-tinted blossoms. It is that of a light of their own colour playing about the plant. This is not the result of an inflammable vapour igniting on the approach of a candle, but seems rather, as Sharon Turner has remarked, "an actual secretion of light additional to their usual show." The cause of this phenomenon has not been discovered, but it seems dependent on an

electrical state of the atmosphere. It has not been seen during the bright sunshine, but has been observed after sunset, in several flowers, in the marigold, the different species of poppy, the scarlet geranium, and even in the heartsease.

A pale light is also given out by certain fungi, for stumps and roots show a brilliance in the progress of decay; this, however, is of a phosphorescent nature. A luminosity so powerful as to enable the bystander to read by it, issues from the common potato, when in a state of putrefaction; and Professor Lindley mentions that an officer who was on guard at a barrack near Strasburg, during night, thought that the building was on fire, and, upon examination, found that the vivid light which had alarmed him proceeded from a heap of potatoes contained in a cellar.

The vast coal-mines of Dresden are said almost to realize, by their lustrous illumination, the appearances described in the fairy tales of the east. In those spots, into which the sun's rays never penetrate, some species of fungus called *Rhizomorpha*, growing over the roofs, pillars, and other parts of these subterraneous places, have been said to emit a light so powerful

as almost to dazzle the eye of the beholder; though it is sometimes so soft and subdued as to resemble a faint moonlight. This fungus is found in many other caverns besides those of Dresden, and adds greatly to the interest which such scenes excite in the traveller.

Among the flowers which, during this month, annoy the farmer, though they please the botanist, the corn-cockle (*Githago segetum*) is very frequent in the field; the corn-cockle is named in the book of Job; thus the patriarch says, "Let thistles grow instead of wheat, and cockle instead of barley;"<sup>1</sup> but as the word which our translators have rendered cockle is expressive of an unpleasant odour, the flea-bane is thought to be here intended.<sup>2</sup>

That very common flower, the scarlet pimpernel (*Anagallis arvensis*), is now smiling by the road-side; it is perhaps better known as the poor man's weather-glass, or shepherd's barometer, both names given on account of its closing before rain. This peculiarity was noticed many years since, and Gerarde thus writes of the pimpernel: "These plants in

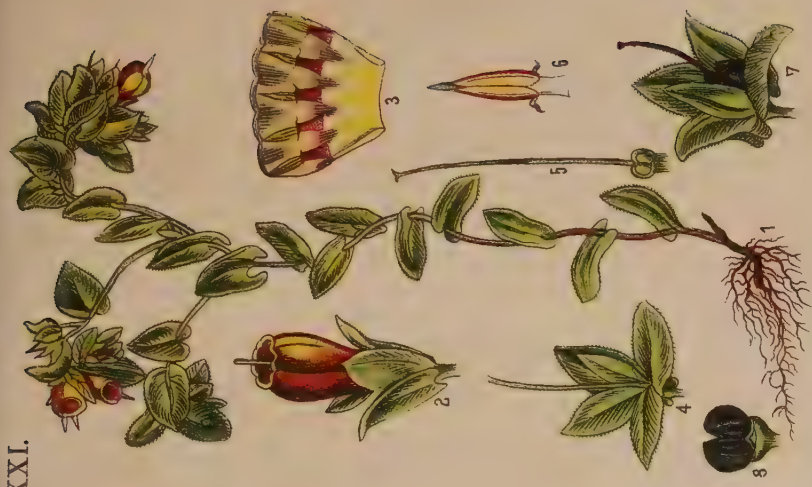
<sup>1</sup> Job. xxxi. 40.

<sup>2</sup> See Henslow's *Plants of the Bible*, p. 258 (Bagster).





Greater Dodder. (*Cuscuta europæa.*)



Large Wax-Flower. (*Cerinthe major.*)



summer, and especially in the month of August, at what time the husbandmen, having occasion to go to their harvest work, will first behold the flower of pimpernel, whereby they know the weather that will follow the next day after; as for example, if the flowers be close shut up, it betokeneth rain and foul weather; contrariwise, if they be opened abroad, fine weather." Though we must not expect so much from the pimpernel as this would promise, yet it is more to be depended on than other wild flowers, which close before rain. It must be remembered, too, that it closes up for the day by twelve o'clock, however bright the sunshine.

The flax (*Linum usitatissimum*) is now in bloom in many wild places. The pale blue erect bell is very frail, falling off even at the touch. This is a plant of much interest. The strong fibres of its bark form the valuable flax of commerce; these fibres, when separated from the plant, compose the tow, which being spun into yarn, is afterwards woven into linen. The stalks require macerating, in order to separate the fibrous strings from the more fleshy substance, and they are laid under water, either

in tanks or ponds, or they are strewn over the grass field, for the dews and sunshine to prepare them for use. Fields of flax have been cultivated from the earliest antiquity, for making linen; and it appears from the scriptures, that a numerous class of people were engaged in the manufacture, among the ancient Hebrews and Egyptians.

The prophet Isaiah, when predicting the wrath of God, and the coming desolation of the land of Egypt, foretells that "they who work in fine flax, and they that weave networks, shall be confounded;" and the "fine twined linen, wrought with needlework," was ordered for many purposes, in the ornament and service of the tabernacle, which the Lord commanded that the children of Israel should make. The mucilaginous seeds of the flax are much employed for poultices, and the flower is so elegant, that it is frequently planted in gardens.

The small common white flax (*Linum catharticum*) is abundant by road-sides, both in England and France, and grows in such profusion about Versailles, that, small as are its pretty flowers, they make the field quite white

by their number. It is often called mill-mountain: country people gather and dry it, as a cure for rheumatism; and Professor Martyn says, "that it is an excellent medicine in that painful complaint."

Even the barren wall bears an aspect of gaiety now, for it is thickly covered with patches of the bright yellow flowers of the stonecrop (*Sedum*), which cluster both here and on the cottage roof. The Latin name of the stonecrop is derived from the word "*sedēre*," to sit, because many of the species may be said to sit on the walls, clothing them like mosses. The yellow biting stonecrop (*Sedum acre*), now in blossom, grows also on sandy hills, and is often planted on rock work in gardens; it is very acrid, and when bitten, its juice leaves on the tongue a flavour as pungent as that of pepper, hence it is frequently called wall-pepper. It has also the old familiar names of gold dust and gold chain. In former days, too, it was known as jack of the buttery, country pepper, pricklet, and bird's bread. It is given in beer or milk to invalids; if laid on the skin, it will quickly raise a blister.

We have eleven wild kinds of stonecrop, which are, with one exception, very similar to

each other in nature and habit, though several have red or white flowers. The plant commonly termed orpine, or livelong (*Sedum Telephium*), differs much from the other stonecrop; it has a spotted stem, and instead of the closely imbricated foliage of the other stonecrops, has broad leaves; its purple flowers appear in July, on waste places, or field borders; its leaves are occasionally boiled and eaten. One would wonder at the taste of those who selected them for this purpose, as even after boiling, they retain a considerable portion of acidity, and though wholesome, are not more so than hundreds of common plants, some of which, like the chickweed and nettle, are used at the poor man's table.

One of our three white-flowered stonecrops (*Sedum album*) is pickled as samphire. A larger white kind, called English stonecrop (*Sedum anglicum*), is very ornamental to the rocks on the Highlands and Hebrides, scattering its white stars by thousands on their else barren surfaces, and supplying their want of verdure by its thick green leaves.

On the summit of the wall, or rock, or still more often at its base, we may now find the



## THE STINGING NETTLES 165

small nettle (*Urtica urens*), full of its green bloom; we have three native species, easily distinguished, even by persons unacquainted with botany, by the circumstances respecting them. The lesser nettle is seldom above two feet high, its leaves are small, and it is not a conspicuous plant; but the great nettle (*Urtica dioica*) cannot be overlooked, and grows by every way-side, often to the height of three feet. The Roman nettle (*Urtica pilulifera*) is not much unlike it, but is comparatively rare, and found chiefly near the sea; this is by far the most virulent of our stinging nettles, and the pain inflicted by its venom remains for several hours. The old English writers had a legend, concerning the introduction of this nettle into our country, which was very generally believed, though, as Ray observes, it is not very likely to be true. Our great antiquary, Camden, records it in his *Britannia*. The Roman nettle was known to have been found growing at Lidd, near Romney, and also in the streets of Romney.

Julius Cæsar landed at Romney, with his soldiers and remained there for some time, on which account the place is supposed to have been

called Romania, of which its modern name is a corruption. The old antiquary relates, that "the soldiers brought some of the nettle seed with them, and sowed it there for their use, to rub and chafe their limbs, when, through extreme cold, they should be stiff and benumbed, being told, before they came from home, that the climate of Britain was so cold, that it was not to be endured, without some friction to warm their blood." No plant, certainly, could better serve to chafe and warm their limbs; but how far the glow would be pleasurable, even to the hardy Roman soldiers, must be questioned.

Though the nettles are not favourite plants with country rambles, yet they are far from being useless. A decoction of nettle juice, mingled with salt, will curdle milk, without imparting any disagreeable flavour; the fibres of the stems are manufactured into cloth, ropes, and even paper. Some lovely kinds of butterfly feed on the nettle; the gay creature

" Array'd

In crimson, azure, emerald, and gold.

With more magnificence upon his wing—

His little wing—than ever graced the robe

Gorgeous of royalty."

Much use is made in Russia of the large

nettle, and in Sweden, it is planted in rows for forage. The roots furnish a beautiful yellow colour to the dyers of Russia, and are very extensively employed by them for this purpose. It is a singular fact, that steel dipped in the juice of the nettle becomes flexible.

But there are still further uses to which this neglected and despised plant may be applied. Dr. Thornton, who has made the medicinal properties of our wild plants his peculiar study, states, that lint dipped in nettle juice, and put up the nostril, has been known to stay the bleeding of the nose, when all other remedies have failed; and adds, that fourteen or fifteen of the seeds, ground into powder, and taken daily, will cure the swelling in the neck, known by the name of goitre, without in any way injuring the general health.

The English word, nettle, with the original sense of "scratcher," is from the Anglo-Saxon *nete*, or *netle*. The pain caused by the sting of this plant arises from the poisonous juice, which lies in a small bag, at the base of each sting, or hair; the fine hair penetrates the skin, and the juice flows through the broken point, into the wound which it has made, and

thus gives a degree of pain, which would not be caused by the mere puncture.

The wild nettles are found everywhere, on the neglected garden or field, on the crumbling wall or towering cliff, or in the dim and gloomy forest. Like the evil passions of man, they need no cherishing ; we have only to leave them undisturbed, and they will take root and grow, and bear fruit abundantly.

The white dead nettle (*Lamium album*) is in appearance something like the true nettle, but its rings of white flowers at once distinguish it, as the blossoms of the true nettles are all green ; its odour is very disagreeable, but Linnæus states, that, in Sweden, it is much employed as a vegetable for the table.

The flower so often praised as the handsomest of our native flowers, the tall and showy fox-glove (*Digitalis purpurea*), graces the banks and hedges, during June and July. The spike of large purple or white freckled bells, and its large leaves, render it so striking an object, that the artist frequently selects it to adorn his painted landscape ; it contains a virulent poison, but is, when properly administered, a most valuable medicine. In some countries, the



Borage. (*Borago officinalis*.)



Forgetmenot. (*Myosotis palustris*.)





foxglove leaf is made into tea, for the sinful purpose of producing intoxication, and degrading the being, to whom God has given an immortal spirit, and a clear intellect, to a condition beneath that of the brutes which perish. This showy flower is peculiar to hilly and rocky situations, and is but little known as a wild flower in some parts of England, as in Norfolk and Suffolk.

On the dry chalky soils, the burnet (*Poterium Sanguisorba*) is blooming, with its heads of purplish-green flowers. It is called the salad burnet, because its leaves have the scent and flavour of the cucumber, and are consequently often used in salad; it is also, as well as the borage, an ingredient in the drink, called a cool tankard.

Few persons could be found in the rural districts of England who are unacquainted with that common flower the mallow (*Malva sylvestris*). It grows by our every road-side, and in almost every meadow, and its handsome lilac flowers and large and numerous leaves form a picturesque object. Common as it is with us, however, it is rarely found in Scotland. The flowers continue through this and the two

following months, and its clumps of leaves remain in the hedges till winter has swept all the remnants of summer beauty before his rains and snows. There are few who have not, during childhood, picked the circular seeds of the mallow, and called them cheeses, and most can sympathize with the reminiscences of Clare on the subject :—

“The sitting down when school was o’er,  
Upon the threshold of the door,  
Picking from mallows, sport to please,  
The crumpled seed we call a cheese.”

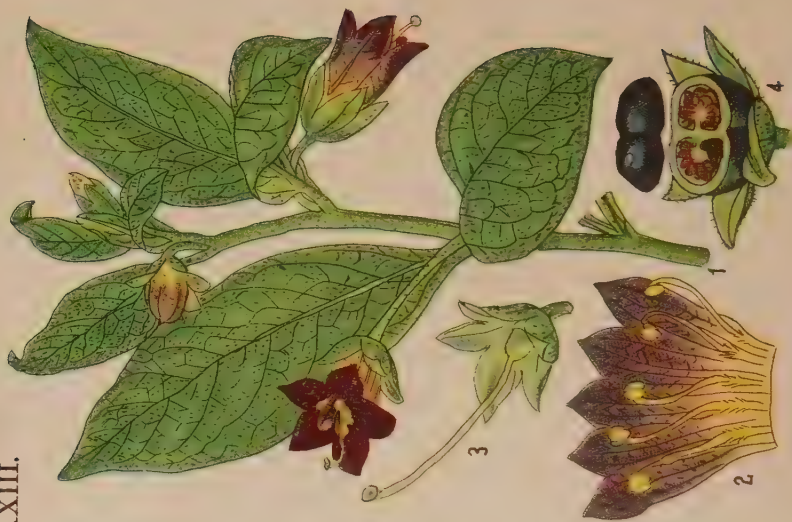
Nor is this play peculiar to the English child, for the French children call them also *les petits fromageons*. Like all the other parts of the plant, they are used in medicines, not only by the cottager, but by the regular practitioner, though the greater part of the marsh mallow causes it to be more generally selected for use than this. The word “mallow” is derived from a Greek word, signifying soft, on account of the emollient properties of the plants of this tribe.

Another kind of mallow not quite so general as this, and easily distinguished from it by its lesser leaves and small pale lilac flowers, grows





Woody Nightshade, or Bittersweet.  
(*Solanum Dulcamara*.)



Deadly Nightshade. (*Atropa Belladonna*.)

by waysides and on waste places. It is the dwarf mallow (*Malva rotundifolia*). It is not in bloom till July, and frequently remains in flower till September.

The only other native mallow—if we except the marsh species, which botanists distinguish by the name of *Althæa*—is the fragrant musk mallow (*Malva moschata*), which is not unfrequent on the gravelly soil of several English counties. In Essex it is very abundant. In many parts of Kent, not a single specimen could be found wild, but it is planted in gardens. The large rose-coloured blossoms of this species are very beautiful, and when a shower has fallen upon them, their musky odour is very powerful.

The bitter-sweet, or woody nightshade (*Solanum Dulcamara*), throws its lurid purple flowers over every hedge; and that lovely flower the wilding rose is one of the sweetest adornments of the green lanes of June. The older writers depreciated this flower so as to call it canker, a name by which it is still known in Devonshire. It was called dog's rose and dog's thorn, because dogs are said to eat the hips. Its beautiful flushed petals have a slight

odour, scarcely stronger than that which the breath of morning brings us from the dewy grass. "A great store of hips and haws," says Lord Bacon, "portends a cold winter:" a statement which, whether true or not, is generally believed by country people. These fruits are to the birds a continual feast, until the frost has rendered them tasteless, or the wind has scattered them under the hawthorn or brier. In the time of Queen Elizabeth, the wild brier hips were made, "by cooks and gentlewomen," into tarts and conserves; and the conserve made from the scarlet fruits of the common dog rose (*Rosa canina*) is still sold by the druggist, and considered better than that which is the produce of the garden flower. From this flower, too, an excellent rose water is distilled.

The sweet-brier rose (*Rosa rubiginosa*), the eglantine of the poets, is common in some parts of England, on open bushy places. It may easily be known from the dog rose by its smaller flowers, of a deeper pink colour, and especially by its fragrant foliage.

The several other wild roses, with the exception of two kinds, are so alike in general appearance, as that they cannot be easily



described in a popular work, so as that the reader may distinguish them. Two common species, however, may be recognized. The little white flowers of the Scotch or Burnet rose (*Rosa spinosissima*) grow plentifully on chalky or sandy soils. It is tinged with cream colour. Its leaves are much smaller than those of the dog rose, of a darker green, and not so glossy; and its stems are so thickly set both with long and short prickles, that it is difficult to gather a branch of its slightly scented flowers. The hip is not scarlet, but of a brown, or purplish black colour, and full of a sweet purple juice. The tall Scotch rose of the garden is very similar to this flower, and probably only a cultivated variety of it.

The bushy field rose (*Rosa arvensis*) is also very common in the southern counties of England. The bush is seldom more than three feet high, but its long winding stems extend to the distance of several feet. The flowers grow in large bunches, and are quite white. The prickles are not numerous on the branches, and the little round buds which cluster upon them are almost destitute of them. This flower is very common in Yorkshire, and has the

repute of being the white rose of the Yorkists, at the time when civil wars desolated our land.

The broom, "the bonnie broom" (*Cytisus scoparius*), with its myriads of golden flowers, is glittering on the dry hill, or heath-land. The farmer eyes it with complacency, for when the broom flowers freely it is generally regarded as a promise of a good harvest. It is an exceedingly beautiful flower, and one over which the bees hover incessantly, and beside which the wanderer on the heath is glad to make his couch, that its odour may sweeten his sleep. The French term it *le genét à balai*, for, like us, they make brooms of its branches. It is said that the house of Plantagenet derived its name from this flower, and various traditions record the circumstance. The one most commonly believed is, that the name was assumed by Geoffrey, earl of Anjou, the husband of Matilda, the haughty empress of Germany ; who, having placed a sprig of the broom in his helmet on the day of battle, acquired the surname, and bequeathed it to his descendants. Perchance, before engaging in the contest, he had lain down among the fragrant broom, and had been struck

by its beauty. Yet flowers seem ill suited to accompany the horrors of war. "Bring flowers," says Mrs. Hemans, "to deck the bride, and to crown the feast;" but bring them "to die in the conqueror's path."

The dyer's green-weed, or woad-waxen (*Genista tinctoria*), has blossoms much like those of the broom, but they are not in flower till a month later. It is common on pastures and field-borders, and is used by dyers in giving a yellow colour to yarn. It is much valued in Russia as a cure for hydrophobia.

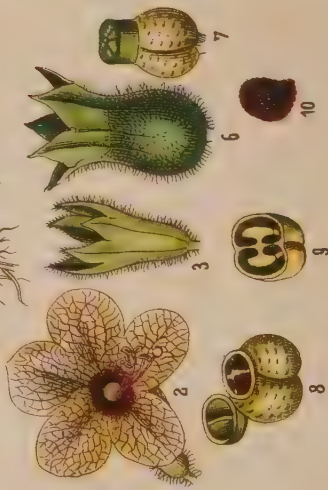
## JULY

Beauty of Nature—Heath—Ling—Wild Thyme—Harebell—  
Bog-pimpernel—Bog-Asphodel—Sundew—St. John's Wort  
—Broom Rape—Scotch Thistle—Carline Thistle—Sweet  
Marjoram—Corn Bluebottle—Scabious—Blue Succory—  
Sow Thistle—Burdock—Water Lily—Meadow Sweet—  
Willow Herbs—Water Arrowhead—Water-cress—Water  
Parsnip—Thrift—Sea Lavender—Tamarisk—Sea Holly—  
Sea Weeds—Tall Teasel—Red Centaury—Woodsage—  
Betony—Hedge Wound-wort—Black Horehound—Mints—  
Rock Rose—Rose of Sharon—Snapdragon—Yellow Toad-  
flax—Yarrow—Knapweeds—Great Mullein—Yellow Hoary  
Mullein—Thorn Apple—Henbane—Horsetails—Elder—  
Bramble—Raspberry

HOW often do a few lines, like those which are placed at the head of this chapter, bring before us the pleasant scenes of the country! The wide-spread open down; the upland moor; the flowers which are springing in the fresh grass or on the brown summer-turf of the heath; how are they present to the eye of the mind, even while the bodily eye is gazing on the brick wall, or the city houses! The love of the country—the love of



Plate XXXIV.



Henbane. (*Hyoscyamus niger*.)



Foxglove. (*Digitalis purpurea*.)



nature, affords, next to religion, the surest means of enjoyment; and may so well be connected with pious thought, that it is often the means of raising us above the world and its cares to the contemplation of God. It is very desirable that the young should cherish it; for he who has been taught to mark the beauties of the starry heavens, and the waving tree, and the wayside flower, has learned a better lesson than if he had been taught to gather gold.

The heath-lands are so beautiful in July, with their gorgeous array of flowers, that one can hardly imagine that the purple bells indicate that the soil is barren and poor. As the bleak winds chase over them in winter, they do, indeed, seem drear; but the seasons come round, and the Almighty causeth "it to rain on the earth . . . to satisfy the desolate and waste ground, and to cause the bud of the tender herb to spring forth,"<sup>1</sup> and then the heath becomes a spot of beauty, fitted to invite the footstep and to charm the spirit.

Our five native species of heath (*Erica*) are very lovely flowers, either of a dark purplish red, or of a rose colour, and are so little like

\* Job xxxviii. 26, 27.

our other wild plants that a few would mistake them. The Highlanders thatch their cottages and make their beds of its sprays, and an old historian relates, that the Picts, who drank a great quantity of ale, made it of the young heath-shoots. Carrington has some lines on this flower:—

“How many a vagrant wing light waves around  
Thy purple bells, Erica! 'Tis from thee  
The hermit birds, that love the desert, find  
Shelter and food. Nor these alone delight  
In the fresh heath. Thy gallant mountaineers,  
Auld Scotia, smile to see it spread immense  
O'er their uncultured hills; and at the close  
Of the keen boreal day, the undaunted race  
Contented on the rude Erica sink  
To healing sleep.”

The ling (*Calluna vulgaris*) is included among the plants which compose the heather; it is more like a small shrub, and has lighter coloured and smaller flowers than the heaths.

The strong sweet scent of the wild thyme (*Thymus Serpyllum*) comes up now to the wanderer over the moor, and it is one of the sweetest of wild odours. Among the Greeks, this flower was an emblem of activity. The highest flavoured venison is furnished by the deer which feed on thymy lands, and sheep, too thrive well on these places.

The bluebell, or harebell (*Campanula rotundifolia*), bends its azure drooping blossoms to the winds, on the chalky cliff or barren hill of England, or Scotland, and graces the solitary ridges. Professor Lindley remarks:—"On the mountains of Switzerland there are species of harebell, with corollas of a pale yellow, spotted with black. On the Alps of India are others of the deepest purple that can be conceived. On the rocks of Madeira lives one which was, formerly, not uncommon in our gardens (*Muschia aurea*), whose corollas are of a rich golden yellow; and, finally, on the pastures of the Cape of Good Hope, are Roellas, the flowers of which are elegantly banded with streaks of violet or rose, passing into white."

A little white harebell, sometimes cultivated in pots, is very common in the meadows of France; and from its modest and pure appearance is called "the nun of the fields."

On the moist bog, or heath, we should now search for the bog-pimpernel (*Anagallis tenella*), with very tiny leaves, and comparatively large rose-coloured blossoms; and we may also find the bog or Lancashire asphodel (*Narthecium ossifragum*) growing near it. The latter plant

bears a spike of pretty yellow flowers, and is very similar to the true asphodel (*Asphodelus*), renowned as the asphodel of the Greek poets, and as the flower with which the ancients planted their graves, and which they used in funeral ceremonies. This plant covers large tracts of land in Apulia.

That singular and insectivorous flower, the sundew (*Drosera rotundifolia*), grows commonly on moist heathy grounds, and its white blossoms may be gathered in July. The curious structure of the leaf is well worth observation. It is covered with hairs tipped with pellucid glands, which exude a clear liquid; these glisten in the sunshine, giving the leaf the appearance of being sprinkled with dew, and by their sweet taste are very attractive to insects. These hairs are not only thick on the surface, but around the edge of the leaf. The insect on alighting on the plant is held a prisoner by these clammy hairs, and the leaf immediately closes over it. Dead flies and other small insects may thus often be found captured by this irritable leaf. The foliage of this flower is very much tinged with crimson, and on drying it for the herbarium, this red hue colours



King Charles's Sceptre.  
(*Peculiaris Sceptrum-Carolinum.*)



Sage. (*Salvia officinalis.*)





the page through several sheets. The plant is so small as that the whole of it might be covered by the palm of the hand. It is very frequent on the downs near Tunbridge Wells.

The sundew is used as an ingredient in the celebrated Italian liqueur, termed Rossoli; it is, nevertheless, very acrid and caustic in its nature; when distilled with lime, it makes a highly stimulating drink, and, in former times, was much used as a tincture. The practice of expressing the juice, for the removal of the freckles and tan which the summer sun gives to the rustic maiden, has long been a common one; its juice is also said to curdle milk.

The various species of St. John's wort (*Hypericum*) are now common everywhere, and their bright yellow flowers, with the scent of rosin, are very pretty. The yellow Lady's bedstraw (*Galium verum*), with its honey-like odour, is, when growing in any quantity, a very great ornament to the heath.

The tall broom-rape (*Orobanche major*), though not very beautiful, is too large and singular a flower to escape notice. This plant is a parasite, growing on the roots of the broom and furze, and even sometimes on that

of the clover ; it very much injures the plant on which it fixes. On heaths it is very common ; it is one, two, or even three feet high, with a stem as thick as a finger, without leaves, but with brown scales. Its flowers grow down about a third of the stem, and are of a dingy purple brown. It has the appearance, on a cursory glance, of being a withered plant. The broom rapes attach themselves particularly to plants which have butterfly shaped blossoms.

The waste places are now enlivened by the beautiful tribes of thistles, whose minute feathery seeds, flying so lightly on the breeze, seem in sufficient profusion to sow the whole land with their flowers. One cannot help remarking how, even when the curse was pronounced on Adam, good was mingled with the evil. God said, "Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee ; in the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat bread,"<sup>1</sup> yet who shall say that toil is an unmixed evil, or that labour brings not an enjoyment with it, when he is the least happy who spends his days in listless idleness ? So even also the thorns bear roses, and the thistle brings forth lovely flowers.

<sup>1</sup> Gen. iv. 18, 19.

We have more than a dozen species of wild thistle, difficult, however, to describe particularly. One species, the milk thistle (*Silybum Marianum*), may be known by its large leaves, chequered with streaks of milky white. This is often called the Scotch thistle, but is not so, for common as it is in England, it is very rare in Scotland; almost the only spot of that country in which it is known to grow is on the rocky cliffs near Dumbarton Castle; and tradition tells, that the unhappy Mary, Queen of Scots, planted it there with her own hand. The beautiful cotton thistle (*Onopordon Acanthium*), which grows by Scotia's highways, is cultivated by Scotsmen, as the Scottish thistle; it seems to have some claim to be regarded as the national insignia, for the hard and sharp spines well accord with the proud defiant motto which accompanies it. The adoption of this flower as the national emblem is said to have arisen from the following circumstance; the Danes were invading the Scottish nation, and, according to their usual practice, attacked them during night, when they were sleeping; they had just reached the Scottish camp, when a Dane placing his naked foot on the spiny leaves of a thistle,

instinctively uttered a cry, which roused the slumbering warriors, who quickly chased the invaders.

Several thistles have a large quantity of cottony down on their stems and leaves, which is picked off by country children for tinder; and their large number of seeds are eaten by birds, especially by the goldfinches, which feed almost entirely on the downy grains of flowers.

One of our wild thistles, the musk thistle (*Carduus nutans*), has beautiful purple blossoms, most powerfully fragrant in the evening; and a more common species, the carline thistle (*Carlina vulgaris*), which is about a foot high, may easily be distinguished from all the others by its yellow flowers; it is frequent on dry and hilly pastures.

The sweet marjoram (*Origanum vulgare*) is now putting forth its clusters of chocolate-coloured blossoms, and shedding a sweet odour over the heath, or chalky bank; a very useful plant it is too, for the dried leaves make a wholesome tea, and are used medicinally. A piece of cotton dipped in the strong oil which may be expressed from it will often cure the toothache; and the young tops are used to dye

cloth of a purple colour, and to give to linen a reddish brown. Its scent is very similar to that of the wild thyme, and the flowers are much like those of that plant, but they grow on a stem, one or two feet high, instead of forming tufts on the ground.

The corn is now fast ripening for the sickle, and very often the corn-field is covered with that bright flower, the blue corn-flower (*Centaurea Cyanus*), verging from a deep blue to a pale azure, or a faint blue tint; its colour is always beautiful and striking. In Scotland it is called blue bonnet, in France, *bluet*; in former times, it was termed in our own land, hurt sickle, "because," says an old writer, "it hindereth and annoyeth the reapers, by dulling and turning the edge of their sickles, in reaping of corn." A brilliant blue juice is obtained by expression from this plant, which gives its tint to linen, but the dye is not permanent.

This flower is a great favourite with German ladies, and they frequently wear it in their hair; it is the companion of the ripening and ripened corn in all the countries of Europe.

The several kinds of scabious are also pretty and common flowers now; the field scabious

(*Scabiosa arvensis*), termed by botanists, field knautia, is very frequent on dry fields, and has large convex heads of flowers, of a beautiful purplish lilac; these flowers, if held in the smoke of tobacco, become of a delicate green colour.

The devil's bit scabious (*Scabiosa succisa*) grows in meadow lands, and is remarkable for its abrupt root, which seems as if bitten off; the fact is, that the top of the root actually dies away, and then a horizontal root is formed; but as no philosophy has yet accounted for the singular fact of this decay, we need not be surprised that, in olden times, it was believed that the great enemy of mankind bit it off in "envie because it had so many excellent vertues." "Unhappily," says Sir J. E. Smith, "this malice has been so successful, that no virtues can be now found in the remainder of the root or herb."

The blue succory, sometimes called chicory, or blue endive (*Cichorium Intybus*), grows alike in corn-fields and hedges, not only in England, but very generally on the continent. The Germans had an old name for it, which signified "keeper of the ways." It has large flowers, the





Common Calamint. (*Calamintha officinalis*.)



Hemp Nettle. (*Galeopsis pubescens*.)



size of half-a-crown, pale blue, and composed of rays, so as that it may truly be called star shaped. In most of the chalky lands of England it is abundant, but it is generally rare in sandy soils.

The flower of the succory opens at eight in the morning and closes at four in the evening, and suggested some verses to a poet, true to nature.

“On upland slopes the shepherds mark  
The hour, when to the dial true,  
Cichorium, to the towering lark  
Lifts her soft eye, serenely blue.

Thus in each flower and simple bell,  
That in our path untrodden lie,  
Are sweet remembrancers, which tell  
How fast the winged moments fly.”

Alas, we little heed “those silent teachers, or the more emphatic monitions of holy writ, of the fleeting nature of our time ! yet the flowers bloom in beauty, and preach their lessons to us as they did to our fathers ; and the Bible gives us its more direct and solemn warnings ; but men live on and heed them not, and pass their fleeting lives as if the world were their final resting place.

The common sowthistle (*Sonchus oleraceus*),

a plant known to every schoolboy as the food of his tame rabbit, and which is equally relished by the wild rabbit of the warren, has the same properties as the succory; and, like that flower, is full of milky juice. Its young leaves are sometimes eaten. This plant is termed by the American settlers, gall of the earth, and is thought by them to cure the bite of the rattlesnake.

And now by every wayside and waste place the large leaves of the common burdock (*Arc-tium Lappa*) are spreading themselves out, and its dull purple flowers, something like those of a thistle, seem small when compared with its foliage. A few weeks later, and these flowers will have changed to balls of seeds, covered with spines, and these fruits well deserve the name *Lappa*, taken from the Celtic *llap*, a hand, for they catch at every passer by.

But it is pleasant, in these days of sunshine, to turn from the open and dry lands to the crystal stream, which wanders by the wood, giving the sweet tones of its rippings to all who will listen.

The glassy pool reflects on its bosom some of our handsomest aquatics. The white water

lily (*Nymphæa alba*), its rose-like flower sitting on the water, has for its companion the yellow water lily (*Nuphar luteum*), and both have large oval leaves, so smooth and shiny that the water runs over them as if their surfaces were oiled. Then by the side, and almost down in the water, the meadow sweet (*Spiræa Ulmaria*), which, as a Kentish poet, Mr. Merritt, has said, has a flower of "lace-like embroidery," is so beautiful and so graceful that the wind which is too soft to stir the stream, bids it nod and rise up again, so prettily, that one might watch its motions and dream that it was some creature of gentle heart and elegant manners. Its odour is very fragrant, but it has too much of the nature of prussic acid to be wholesome in a close apartment. An instance of the dangerous properties of the meadow sweet occurred in Kent, a few years since.

Two young men, who had gone thither from London to spend a day in roving among hills and glades, and to gather the wild flowers from some of the sweetest nooks of that beautiful county, went, in the evening, laden with their nosegays, to a village inn. They had been struck with the loveliness of the meadow sweet,

and had gathered a large store to take away with them. In the night both became ill, and the surgeon who was sent for detected, immediately on entering their chamber, a strong scent of prussic acid. This he found to proceed from a quantity of the withering flowers of the meadow sweet, which they had incautiously laid around and under their beds. Both suffered severely, and one of them so much so, that he remained ill for several weeks. This flower is sometimes called queen of the meadows, and the French too term it *la reine des pres*. The stems are used in some countries for dyeing.

We have several very pretty willow-herbs (*Epilobium*), which with their purplish red blossoms deck the summer hedges; the handsomest of the tribe growing near streams.

The Kamschatdales are very fond of an intoxicating liquor made from some species, and they also prepare vinegar from them, and eat the young shoots as food.

The flowers of the willow herb are seated upon long pods, which contain a number of seeds crowned each with a tuft of down. These seeds are most frequently the produce of rayed flowers, like the dandelion and thistle; but



some few flowers, as the willow-herb and clematis, send them forth also by thousands. The latter plant is so covered with them, that if in winter it grows near a town, the hedge looks as if the spiders had been diligently weaving their tapestry about the branches, and produced a drapery of cobwebs; or if it be far away among the wild woods, where the smoke cannot reach it, it seems as if the swan had bestowed its down upon it. The great quantity of down yielded by the seeds of the willow-herbs has induced some writers to recommend their cultivation for manufactures. The down has been mingled with fur or wool, and made into stockings, with very good success.

A very pretty aquatic, the water arrowhead (*Sagittaria sagittifolia*), easily known from all our other water plants by its arrow-shaped leaves, is frequently found in the pools in July. It has white flowers, and its leaves lie in large masses on the surface of the stream. The root is most nutritious, and might well be used in this country as food; but in warmer climates where the whole plant is more luxuriant, its large size renders it very valuable.

The “cresses, which grow where no man

may see them," now often lie in abundance on the secluded stream. Our rural flora does not furnish a more wholesome salad herb than the water-cress (*Nasturtium officinale*). The only danger which arises from eating this plant, is that the incautious cress gatherer may have mixed with it some sprays of the water dropwort (*Enanthe crocata*), a plant common in streams, and which is very poisonous in its nature. Inexperienced persons may mistake one of these plants for the other, but a little observation will detect the difference between them. In the water-cress, the leaflet which grows at the termination of the leaf-stalk is rounder and larger than the other leaflets; while that of the water parsnip is smaller than the rest. The blossoms of the water-cress are white, small, and cross shaped. This plant is now much cultivated in streams, near London, Paris, Edinburgh, and other large cities.

The salt marshes near the shore, and even the sands of the sea, now show a few blossoms. The white or pink heads of the thrift (*Armeria vulgaris*), often called sea-turf, are very plentiful. The sea-lavender (*Statice Limonium*), with its handsome spike of blue lilac flowers, and that



Upright Woundwort. (*Stachys recta*.)



Vervain. (*Verbena officinalis*.)



elegant cypress-like shrub, the tamarisk (*Tamarix gallica*), with rose-coloured blossoms, which show to great advantage among its light and graceful foliage, often enliven the salt marsh, or the rocky cliff.

On some of our shores, too, the tall sea-holly (*Eryngium maritimum*) makes its appearance on the sands. It is a stiff and rigid plant, with firm prickly leaves beautifully veined; and, like those of the generality of our sea-side plants, of a pale sea-green hue. Its flowers are blue, and shaped much like the thistle's. The roots have a pleasant taste, and are often candied for a sweetmeat, being considered stimulating and restorative in their properties. Linnæus says that the young shoots of this plant are eaten in Sweden, after being blanched, and are scarcely inferior to asparagus. He recommends their use in other countries.

The sea-weeds (*Fuci*) are always scattered over the shores, for they are little affected by the changing seasons. The bed of the ocean being less exposed to changes of temperature than the land, and the great body of water being never either completely hot, or cold, the plants growing in the sea do not experience

that change of seasons which so determines the growth of land vegetation. In some seas, however, marine plants are much more luxuriant than around our island. In all countries, the base of the ocean is continually rising by the increase of plants, just as the site of the city rises in progressive years by the accumulation of soil.

Sea-weeds afford soda and colour for dyeing ; and their gelatinous nature renders many of them nutritious and medicinal. Iodine, so often administered in cases of glandular enlargement, is procured from several species of sea-weed.

The woodland scenery is not so brightly green as during last month. Although autumn has not yet touched the leaves with brown, yet their verdure is of a duller cast, and here and there the slight tinge of yellow may be seen. The flowers in the wood are also few now, compared with those of the earlier months. The wild teasel (*Dipsacus sylvestris*) shows itself almost like a young shrub ; and that pretty low flower, the red centaury (*Erythræa Centaurium*),—its red blossoms growing in clusters, and shaped something like those of the garden jessamine, though smaller—is very common,



both in woods, and on dry pastures. Its bitter principle is said to be equal to that of the gentian. This flower closes so early that only those who walk in the former part of the day see its beauty. By twelve o'clock it begins to shut up, and if a cloud is on the sky, it does not open at all. This is evidently because of the moisture of the atmosphere, even when it is not perceptible to us; for if the flower be taken indoors and placed near a fire, it will expand fully.

The wood Sage (*Teucrium Scorodonia*), a common plant with spikes of green flowers, tinged with a brown hue, is now very plentiful on dry grounds. It has leaves wrinkled like those of the garden sage, and so bitter that they are very suitable for the purpose of mingling with hops in making beer—a use to which they are continually applied by the Swede, and sometimes by the English cottager. The betony, too (*Betonica officinalis*), is very generally in flower in this month. This flower has somewhat the appearance of the red dead nettles, though its purplish red blossoms are lighter and brighter than theirs. In some parts of Kent it is commonly gathered in bundles

and hung up around the ample fireplace of the farm kitchen, or suspended from the cottage ceiling ready for use. The whole plant gives a yellow colour to wool, and the root is extremely bitter.

The hedge wound-wort (*Stachys sylvatica*) is also very common in the hedge from June till August. It has around its stem a number of purplish red flowers streaked with white, and leaves something like those of the stinging nettle in shape, but very silky and downy. Its old familiar name distinguishes it as a plant often used for staying the effusion of blood. This flower was also called clown's-all-heal. When compounds and extracts from plants and minerals were less common than at present, an acquaintance with the virtues of plants was of more value than in modern days.

The common black horehound (*Ballota nigra*), with its whorls of dull, cheerless red flowers, and its dusty-looking foliage, was once thought a very useful plant, and is still sometimes made into a candied sweetmeat. Country people say, that the plant has an odour of graves, but its frequent growth in churchyards probably contributed to this idea. The catmint

(*Nepeta Cataria*) is another common plant, and it is really amusing to see how cats are excited by it, and with what avidity they devour it. Its scent is too strong to be agreeable.

The numerous tribe of mints (*Mentha*) all flower, either in this, or the following month, and may be recognized by their strong perfume, which, in all the species, resembles, more or less, the garden mint (*Mentha viridis*) used at table. The distilled waters made from these plants are well known. Some of the mints are handsome as wild flowers, and growing by river sides, or on field-borders, look very beautiful on the summer landscape.

But leaving the less gay and showy flowers, for one of rich golden beauty, we may now see in full bloom the lovely yellow blossom of the rock-rose (*Helianthemum vulgare*). This flower grows sometimes singly, more often in clumps, on rocky barren places; just such spots as are described in the parable of the sower; where if the sower were to sow his corn, it might spring up and wither away, because there is no deepness of earth. But many a dry and arid spot is clothed by God with occasional verdure and beauty; for He has fitted the flower to the soil,

and given to all their appointed times and places. This flower is not of a bright glossy colour, like the buttercup, nor of the firm structure of that blossom; but the petals are of a paler tint, and velvet surface, and so soft and crumpled, that they seem as if they had been wrinkled by being crowded in the cup, out of which they expand. They are of the shape of the brier rose, or rather of the strawberry flower, as they are flat when fully open. It was termed *Helianthemum* from two words signifying the sun and a flower; perhaps, because of its golden beauty; but more probably, because of the old fancy that its flowers always turned to meet the sun. Professor Rennie says of the rock rose, "If you take a small probe, or hog's bristle, and irritate any of the numerous stamens of this flower, you will see them fall back from the central column, and spread themselves upon the petals, exhibiting a very pretty example of vegetable irritability little less striking than that of the sensitive plant."

This simple flower has another point of interest, which is, that the rose of Sharon is thought by Linnæus, and many travellers in the east, to be merely a variety of our common





Greater Bladderwort. (*Utricularia vulgaris*.)



Cowslip. (*Primula veris*.)



rock rose. The *cistus roseus*, differing little from our wild flower, except in colour, is regarded as the rose of Sharon, because it abounds in that valley, and is scattered in such rich profusion, that it is one of the most striking objects of its vegetation; while none of those plants which are termed roses are found there, or in the neighbourhood.

In the old churchyard, or garden wall, the purple, pink, or white snapdragon (*Antirrhinum majus*), now waves to the soft wind. Children call it bull dog's and rabbit's mouth, and its flower has really an odd resemblance to the mouth of the latter animal. The author of the *Journal of a Naturalist* remarks, that these flowers are perfect insect traps; and "multitudes of small creatures," he adds, "seek an entrance into the corolla, through the closed lips, which, upon a slight pressure, yield a passage, attracted by the sweet liquor which is found at the bottom of the germen; but when so admitted there is no return, the lips are closed, and all advance to them is impeded by a dense thicket of woolly matter, which invests the mouth of the lower jaw. But the snapdragon is more merciful than most of

our insect traps. The creature receives no injury from confinement, but having consumed the nectareous liquor, and finding no egress, breaks from its dungeon by gnawing a hole at the bottom of this tube, and returning to liberty and light. The extraordinary manner in which the corolla is formed, the elastic force with which the lower limb closes and fits upon the projection of the upper, manifest the obvious design of the great Architect.

The French call the snapdragon *mufle de veau*, and the Russians highly value its seeds, which are very numerous. From these they express an oil little inferior in quality to that obtained from the olive.

A very common flower, with blossoms shaped like those of the snapdragon, the yellow toad-flax (*Linaria vulgaris*), is now conspicuous in hedges by waysides; for though it scarcely blooms till August, yet its stem of crowded slender leaves of a greyish green, cannot escape notice. Country people term this pretty wild flower, butter and eggs. The juice of the toad-flax is often expressed, and when mingled with milk, is set in an open dish, to attract flies, and its sweet flavour proves to them poison.

The vervain, once so renowned by the Romans, and praised by our forefathers as the holy herb, now shows its small lilac flowers near houses ; and milfoil or yarrow (*Achillæa millefolium*) is to be found in every meadow. This was formerly called nose bleed, but is now better known by the name of old man's pepper. Its leaves are very pungent.

The Highlanders make of it an ointment, and it was used for this purpose by the ancient Greeks, who told that Achilles discovered and applied its virtues.

Then the tall brown knapweeds and the handsome mullein are showy flowers now. The former are often called iron weeds, from the hard brown ball or cup, on which the purple florets are set. The flower of the knapweeds is much like that of the thistle, but it may always be known from a thistle, by its having no spines or prickles upon it ; except in one species, the common star thistle, which is indeed very nearly allied to the former tribe. The common black knapweed (*Centaurea nigra*) is a very frequent weed in meadows, and it is refused by cattle, both while it is growing, and when made up into hay. This plant stains linen of a bright

blue colour, and its juice is expressed for ink.

The common star-thistle (*Centaurea Calci-trapa*), or Jersey thistle, as it is often called, is found near the sea, and also on chalky or gravelly banks. It is singular from having on its calyx a number of large green spines, which, as the plant grows older, turn into hard wood. Hence this flower received its Latin name from the caltrops, or iron ball of spikes, used in the early and middle ages, for throwing under the horses' feet in the field of battle. This flower is the caltrops of Virgil.

We have no less than seven native species of mullein now in blossom; the great mullein (*Verbascum Thapsus*) is one of the largest and most conspicuous of our wild flowers. The stems, both of this, and the hoary mullein, are about four or five feet in height; the flowers grow about one or two feet down the stem, and are of a pale yellow. The stem is very thick and woolly, and the large leaves which grow about the root, are so densely covered on both surfaces with wool, that Kentish people call the mullein, flannel flower; the wool is frequently picked off for tinder, and is recommended by

many writers, as applicable to the purposes of manufacture.

The blossoms of the great mullein are sometimes laid to dry in the sun, when a soft unctuous substance exudes from them, which is spread on linen, and used by villagers as an application to the chest. This plant was formerly called high taper and torches; and the white mullein was termed candleweek flower. Nor are they unfitted to suggest the idea of the tapers which are burned before the images of saints, in those countries in which men are beguiled into what the Apostle Paul calls "a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels," instead of holding the "Head of the Church" as their only Advocate at the throne of God's grace.

The yellow hoary mullein (*Verbascum pulverulentum*) has its hundreds of flowers so lightly set upon its stem, that a small blow given to it with a stick, will scatter them all on the ground. It has a quantity of mealy down on its leaves, which comes off on the hand if it is passed over them. The little moth mullein (*Verbascum Blattaria*), rare in most counties, but often found in Kent, received its name from its

virtue, whether real or imagined, of driving from its neighbourhood the blatter or cock-roach.

Two very poisonous flowers bloom during July and August on waste grounds, and near to houses or ruins. The thorn-apple and the henbane are both to be dreaded for their dangerous properties ; yet the narcotic principle found in both, is useful when carefully administered, and will give sleep to the sufferer whose eyes have long waited for it in vain.

The thorn-apple (*Datura Stramonium*) is rather a naturalized than, strictly considered, a wild flower ; for our great herbalist Gerarde, having received a present from Constantinople of some of its seeds, dispersed it, as he says, through the land. It is one of the most common and troublesome weeds in America, and the colonists are at considerable pains to extirpate it, before they can transform the wild wastes or crowded forests of that country into fertile lands. Whenever any plants are brought into England from America, its seeds are conveyed in the soil, and it springs up plentifully around them. Its bell-shaped flower is very handsome, and its delicate beauty is shielded from the dews



of night by its leaves, which, when darkness comes on, rise close around the flower, and protect it from the damp air.

The henbane (*Hyoscyamus niger*), so often smoked by country people for toothache, and so useful also to the physician, has a greenish yellow flower, pencilled all over with purple lines. The seeds found in its "belted pod" are often a plaything for children; and Professor Martyn says he has eaten them without any ill effects, while other botanists affirm that the seeds have deprived persons of the use of their limbs, and even of reason. To all the inferior animals, except swine, they are poisonous. The whole plant is covered with hairs, and the peculiar odour that proceeds from it would at once point it out to the botanist as a poisonous flower.

These curious plants, the horsetails (*Equisetum*), now put forth their cones or catkins, some of them by river-sides, many under hedges, or in fields. They have long leaves set in whorls round the stem, each leaf not thicker than a common cord. We pay but little regard to these plants, but to the housewives of olden times they were of great service.

The pewter kitchen utensils were daily scoured into brightness with this plant, which was once called pewterwort. It was sold in the London streets, both for this purpose and also for cleaning those wooden platters and bowls, almost unknown in modern kitchens, but which, in other days, held the roast beef of Old England. Sometimes the plant was called shave-grass; and comb-makers and other workmen who wanted a polish to the articles they made, rubbed them with its rough hard substance; but it was not known till recently that this hardness was caused by an abundance of flint in this plant.

The so-called Dutch Rush (*Equisetum hyemale*) is still much used by whitesmiths and cabinet-makers in their work, and also by the Northumbrian dairymaids in cleaning their milk-pails. It grows in our bogs, but not very generally; and as the swampy grounds of Holland furnish it in great quantities, it is imported hither from that country, and called Dutch rushes. Our great water horsetail (*Equisetum fluviatile*), very frequent in ponds, was a common article of food among the Romans. The reindeer, which will not feed upon hay, will eat this plant.

And now the white bunches of flowers on the elder tree are gradually giving way to the green elder-berries, which in a few weeks will be quite black. The elder (*Sambucus nigra*) is very common in woods and hedges, and its wood is so hard that Pliny said of the plant that it was all skin and bones. The berries are poisonous to poultry, yet they make an excellent wine. The Romans were accustomed to stain their hair black with their juice; and these fruits, as well as the bark and leaves, are used medicinally. So highly did the celebrated physician of Leyden, Boerhaave, estimate the properties of this plant, that he never passed it without taking off his hat—not so much, it is to be hoped, in veneration of the tree itself, as in thankfulness to the God who made it. The young shoots of this tree are often used as a pickle, and the elder flower ointment is so general an application, especially in villages, that most persons know it. The scent of the elder flower is very powerful, but not very pleasant. This is one of the few trees which are not hurt by exposure to the sea breeze.

Now, too, the pretty rose-like flower of the bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*), with its “gauzy

satin frill," is waving on the long flexible sprays. To many, beside the poet, the bramble tells a tale of other days—a tale of youthful pleasures, when roaming in country lanes and fields, we gathered blackberries for our food, and when

"The linnet from the self-same bush  
Came after us to dine."

And, in later years, when the graver concerns of life occupy us, and, perhaps, its trials weigh heavily upon the spirits, it is well to be recalled, for a moment, to the simple and inexpensive sources of joy which blessed our childhood. The bramble, or blackberry, is, when eaten ripe, a perfectly wholesome fruit. Country people often make this fruit into pies and tarts, and it forms a good and cheap preserve, as it requires not more than half the quantity of sugar which is used for other preserved fruits, and the coarsest sugar may be used in making it. The red muscat of Toulon, is said to receive its red colour from the blackberry; and in several parts of the south of France this fruit is so large and juicy, that it is commonly called, *pinte de vin*. The bramble leaves and stems are used in dyeing, and the young tops and





Upright Globularia. (*Globularia vulgaris*.)

Sow-bread. (*Cyclamen europæum*.)



leaves were a common salad at the tables of the ancient Greeks.

One common use of the bramble stem must have often attracted our attention, when we have wandered in the quiet village churchyard. Its young shoots serve to bind down the sods, under which repose the "young men and maidens, old men and children."

"O'er some of these  
The flight of centuries has passed—alas!  
Above the wept remains of others, yet  
The fresh-reared hillock waves not in the wind  
Its friendly robe of green."

The bramble was, of old, used for this purpose; for Jeremy Taylor, when commenting on the certainty of man's mortality, says, "The autumn, with its fruits, prepares disorders for us, and the winter's cold turns them into sharp diseases; and the spring brings flowers to strew upon our hearse; and the summer gives green turf and brambles to bind upon our graves."

The thorny branches of this plant exhibit many a reddish green spray of leaves in winter. It is a native both of cold and hot climates, and found wild in every country in Europe. Other species of *Rubus*, known by the name of dewberry, cloudberry, besides bramble, are

common in Britain; and the raspberry (*Rubus Idæus*) is occasionally found wild in our woods, and was known to the older writers as the raspis, or hindberry. The Arctic bramble (*Rubus arcticus*), so common in Sweden, bears a fruit much eaten by the people of that country.

The bramble is the subject of the oldest apologue extant, when Jotham, bitterly reproaching the men of Shechem for their ingratitude to his father's house, narrated to them, in the eastern manner, the parable of "the trees choosing a king."<sup>1</sup>

Of other July plants, the following may be mentioned:—Woad (*Isatis tinctoria*, Pl. 6) was formerly grown for the blue dye at Glastonbury, and until lately at Wisbech. It occurs on the cliffs near Tewkesbury, elsewhere as an escape. The Carthusian pink (*Dianthus Carthusianus*, Pl. 8) is a native of Germany. The bean-bush (*Cytisus capitatus*, Pl. 12), allied to our broom (*C. Scoparius*), comes from Austria. The horn-nut or water-chestnut (p. 141) (*Trapa natans*, Pl. 19), grows in S. European waters. The Pi-tsi or "ling" of China is *T. bicornis*.

<sup>1</sup> Judges ix. 8-15.

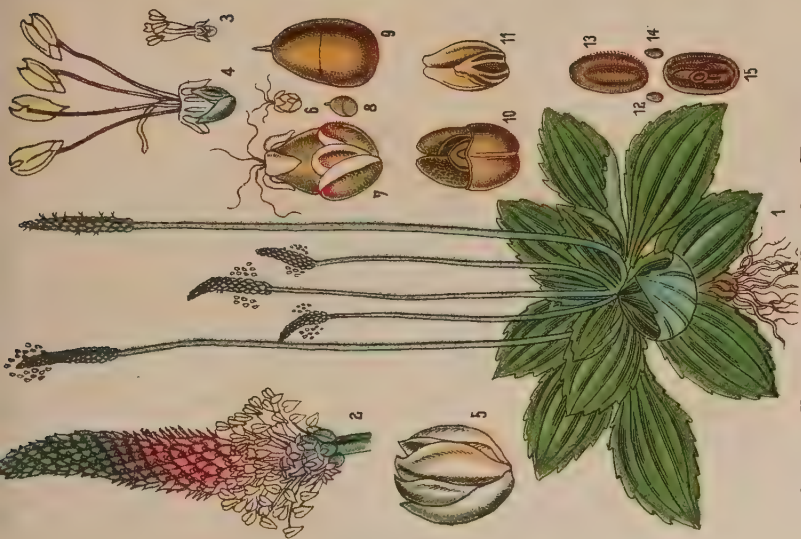
## AUGUST

Hawkweeds—Chamomile—Cudweeds—Spurge—Corn-fields—  
Corn—Wild Marigold—Spurrey—Mignonette—Tansy—  
Southernwood—Elecampane—May Weed—Hemp Agri-  
mony—Grass of Parnassus—Reed Mace—Sea Southern-  
wood—Horned Poppy—Salt-wort—Samphire—Sand-worts  
—Sea-side Convolvulus—Sea Purslane—Goosefoots

**A**UGUST, with its flowers and fruits, wears a rich and plenteous aspect. The brown corn, now ready for the sickle, is waving over the field; the broad and leafy branches of the trees afford a shade to the tired cattle; the golden cones of the hop are twining round the tall poles; and the orchard trees are laden with ruddy fruits. The flowers look gay and brilliant, for autumn flowers are mostly yellow, and they seem to cluster in such abundance that none would suspect that they are far fewer in variety than in the preceding months. Perhaps, twice the number of species of wild flowers might be found by the botanist during the month of June

than he could find now ; and though many summer blossoms still linger, yet those strictly peculiar to August are comparatively so few that we can but remark that the year is making rapid progress to its close.

One of the tribes of the plants most likely to attract our eye during this month, by the great number of its flowers, is the hawkweed. They form a family of plants very puzzling to the botanist, by the resemblance of the species to each other. The hawkweeds may be described generally as flowers shaped like the dandelion, their leaves are also often similar in form, but the whole structure of the flower is lighter and more delicate. Some of the blossoms are very small, others as large as a marigold, and they vary in all shades of yellow, from a deep bright orange colour to the pale lemon tint which distinguishes one of our commonest and prettiest kinds. This species is the mouse-ear hawkweed (*Hieracium Pilosella*), and it may at once be known from the others by its paler hue, scarcely deeper than that of the primrose, and also by its creeping habit. It grows on dry pastures, and unless the garden lawn be carefully cut, it will spring up there beside the daisy ;



Hoary Plantain, or Lamb's Tongue.  
(*Plantago media*.)



Perennial Goosefoot. (*Chenopodium Bonus-Henricus*.)





for it commonly spangles the short grass, or turf, of that and similar spots.

When the Almighty, in His solemn arguings with Job, reproved him for presumption, He asked, "Doth the hawk fly by thy wisdom?" and the unerring instinct which guides that strong and quick-sighted bird to his prey is a striking proof of the skill and power of the All-wise and All-powerful. The old tradition, that the hawk fed upon the hawkweed, and led her young ones early to eat this plant, that, by its juices, they might gain acuteness of vision, was believed, some centuries since, not only in our land, but throughout Europe; for the popular name of this flower in France is *L'Epervière*, and the Germans call it *Habichtskraut*. An American species of hawkweed is considered to possess great medicinal virtues, and commonly called, in America, poor Robin's plantain.

Several kinds of chamomile are also blooming now. All the common sorts of this flower have yellow disks and white rays; but the corn marigold (*Chrysanthemum segetum*) is wholly yellow. The plant which produces the fragrant flower sold by the druggists as a tonic is a native

of Britain. It is the *Anthemis nobilis*, and is often cultivated for the purposes of commerce. The bed of chamomile is frequently found in the cottage garden, and most fully do the villagers believe the old English proverb: "Chamomile, the oftener it is trodden upon, the faster it grows." The whole plant is very bitter, and its old name is derived from a Greek word signifying apples, because it was thought to have the scent of that fruit.

We have five wild species of chamomile, and three of these are very common flowers. One kind, the stinking May-weed (*Anthemis Cotula*), has, indeed, the most disgusting odour. It grows by road-sides and waste places, and often blisters the hands of those who gather it.

A very pretty family of plants, the cudweed, is abundant in August. One species is well known, and may serve to guide to the others, though none of our wild kinds are so handsome as this. It is the flower called everlasting love, and is familiar to those who have visited the celebrated cemetery of Père la Chaise, where wreaths of its blossoms, dyed of a deeper yellow, and intermingled with others dyed of a jet black, are thrown upon the tombs of the beloved, or

celebrated, and sold in all the ways which lead to the ground. The Parisians term this flower *l'immortelle*. It is a native of Africa, and the *Helichrysum orientale* of the botanist. Our wild cudweeds are smaller than this, and their stems and foliage generally covered with woolly and cottony down.

Most of the wild cudweeds (*Gnaphalium*) grow on sandy heaths, or pastures; some on mountains, and a few on bogs. One of the most frequent of an allied genus (*Filago germanica*) is found on dry places, and as its mode of growth is very singular, it may, by this, be known from the remainder of the species. The stem is about eight inches high, terminated by a globular head of blossoms, from beneath which spring two or three more branches, each having a head of flowers at the point, and these all rise above that which terminates the main stem. The old botanists called this flower wicked herb (*Herba impia*), because it conveyed the idea that children were undutifully disposed to exalt themselves above the parent flower. It was also called live long, chaff-weed, cotton-weed, and dwarf cotton.

The various kinds of spurge mostly produce

their yellowish green flowers in this and the following month. The sun-spurge (*Euphorbia Helioscopia*) is common everywhere, and is a good example of our native species, for they are all very similar in general appearance. It is found on waste-grounds, as a garden weed, and in corn-fields. Its stem is so full of thick white milk that it is often called churn-staff; and as this liquid is a common cure for warts, it will point out the plant to the reader. We have fourteen wild kinds of spurge, and a number of exotic species have been imported, but they have little beauty. The juice of all is acrid, and almost all our wild spurges are poisonous.

One species, the caper-spurge (*Euphorbia Lathyris*), is rare in woods, but it is often planted in shrubberies. It has grey green leaves, and much resembles the true caper-plant. Indeed its seeds, which are about the size and colour of the caper-bud, are pickled and used in Paris as capers; but there is reason to believe that, if eaten in any quantity, they are very pernicious. A very common kind, the cypress-spurge (*Euphorbia Cyparissias*), readily distinguished from the rest by its long, slender, numerous leaves,



Plate XLI.



Alder. (*Alnus glutinosa*.)



Rose Willow. (*Salix purpurea*.)



was formerly called, "Welcome to our house;" though on what account so dangerous a herb was so gratefully welcomed one cannot guess. The gum-resin, termed *Euphorbium*, which is diluted for medicinal purposes, is obtained by incision from a common African species. Its fresh juice raises blisters on the skin; and the poor people employed in collecting it are so affected by the noxious properties of the withered branches of the plant, that they are obliged to cover their faces with a linen cloth when they approach it. One British species, the Irish spurge (*Euphorbia hiberna*), is stated by Hooker to be much used by the peasants of Ireland for poisoning, or rather stupefying fish. He adds, that its qualities are so powerful as that a small creel, or basket, filled with the bruised plant, will suffice to poison the fish for several miles down the river.

The corn-fields, which are now ripe and brown, add much to the beauty of the landscape of August. The healthful toil of the reaping peasant, and the busy employment of the rustic maid and matron, are interesting to every one fond of the country. To those whose minds are well stored with Scripture story, and

who have associations formed between the scenes of nature and the descriptions of holy writ, the corn-field is connected with the remembrances of bygone ages. The pious attachment of the gentle Ruth, who chose to share the sufferings of her aged relative, and to follow her to the land, blessed with the ordinances of the God of Israel: those touching words of love spoken by her, "Whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God; where thou diest will I die, and there will I be buried:" all these things are brought vividly before the mind, as we mark the gleaner, who, like her of old, fills her apron with the brown ears of corn.

The remembrance of the early disciples, who, being hungry, "plucked the ears of corn, and did eat, rubbing them in their hands;" and the emphatic words of our Lord, who, when calling their attention to the state of the world, and the need of missionary exertion, said, "Look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest;" and that solemn comparison of the harvest to the end of the world, when "the reapers are the angels," and God

shall separate the chaff from the wheat, will recur to the thoughtful reader of Scripture, to whom God has given feeling and imagination, and may fill the inmost recesses of his mind with trains of holy and devout imagery. Such a wanderer will not think it enough to exclaim, "All Thy works shall praise Thee, O Lord," but will add, with his whole heart, "and Thy saints shall bless Thee !"

Corn, in the state in which we have it, when cultivated, does not grow wild in any land; and the field, of wheat or rye, of oats or barley, as well as the maize and millet-crops of other lands, attest, wherever they are found, that man has been there, not as the roving Arab or the restless Indian, but as the tiller of the soil and the settled inhabitant of the country. The corn-plants are termed the cereal grasses; and that species by which the people of the land is mainly supported is called pre-eminently corn.

The most showy flower of the corn-field, in this month, is the corn marigold (*Chrysanthemum segetum*). The old writers, and even our earliest British poet, Chaucer, knew it by the name of gold; and it is still called goules,

or goulans, in some counties of England. It is quite as large, or even larger, than the garden marigold; which flower also grows wild in the corn-fields of Southern Europe, and is called by the Italians, the flower of every month. The corn-marigold blossoms as early as July, and it bears the cold of winter better than many of our flowers; for if the autumnal and winter seasons are not very severe, it may be found bright and blooming as late as December, and

"Cheering through the shortening day  
Is autumn with her weeds of yellow."

This flower is rather local in its haunts; it is by no means common in Kent, though abundant in some of the neighbouring counties. In the corn-fields, within a few miles of Paris, it grows so profusely, that the land is as gay with its golden flowers as our fields are with the charlock, or our spring meads with the buttercup. In Denmark, it is so common and troublesome a weed, that a law was made, some years since, compelling the farmer to eradicate it. The deep yellow juice of this flower is used, by the Germans, for giving a permanent dye to stuffs. The corn-marigold was formerly





German Flag. (*Iris germanica*.)



Lady's Slipper. (*Cypripedium calceolus*.)



called St. John's bloom, yellow-bottle, and ruddes.

Early in this month we find that unwelcome intruder in the corn-lands, the spurrey (*Spergula arvensis*). This pretty little flower may be thus described. Its stem is from six to twelve inches high. The leaves are slender, scarcely thicker than coarse threads, and they stand in circles all around the stem. At the summit is a cluster of white flowers, each hardly larger than that of the chickweed. This plant, though an annoyance in the corn-fields, is so eagerly eaten by cattle, that when it grows occasionally on sandy heaths and pastures, it is a useful herb; and, in Holland, it is sown in fields, for pasturage. It is named from *spargo*, to scatter, because it scatters an abundance of seeds. In Scotland it is called yarr; but the Norfolk farmers, jealous of their corn-lands, term it pick-pocket.

In every hedge may now be seen the pale yellow spike of the wild mignonette (*Reseda luteola*) which is often called dyer's weed, as it has been used for dyeing, especially in France. The whole plant affords juice for this purpose. and its colour is good and permanent. The

coloured paint, called by artists Dutch pink, is obtained from it. Linnæus remarked, of this flower, that its spike of bloom always follows the course of the sun, even on a cloudy day; turning, at sun-rise, to the east; at noon-day, looking up to the south; in the afternoon, marking the west; and, with its half-closed flowers, standing at night, pointing duly to the north. It is very similar in appearance to that sweetly-fragrant plant, the garden mignonette (*Reseda odorata*). This was thought to be a native of Egypt, and was known, long after its introduction into England, by the name of the Egyptian's mignonette.

The tansy (*Tanacetum vulgare*) grows wild in some fields. It was formerly called Athanasia by botanists, and the French still dedicate it to the saint of that name. The flowers of the tansy are in thick yellow clusters. Its strongly aromatic and bitter principle render it a useful plant in medicine; and its young leaves are made into puddings, cakes, and omelets, though the flavour is too strong to be generally palatable. A distilled water is obtained from this plant. This flower was formerly very general in gardens, but is left now for the

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cottage ground, where, in the rustic plot, it still takes its place with the flowers which the poet Clare describes :—

“And where the marjoram once, and sage and rue,  
And balm and mint, with curl'd-leaf parsley grew,  
And double marigolds, and silver thyme,  
And pumpkins 'neath the window used to climb ;  
And where I often, when a child, for hours  
Tried through the pales to get the tempting flowers ;  
As lady's laces, everlasting peas,  
True-love lies bleeding, with the hearts at ease ;  
And golden rods, and tansy running high,  
That o'er the pale-top smiled on passer-by ;  
Flowers in my time, that every one would praise,  
Though thrown, like weeds, from gardens now-a-days.”

On a few sandy soils may now also be seen the plant called field southernwood (*Artemisia campestris*), with its smooth green leaves and whitish flowers. It has been found chiefly on some lands of Norfolk and Suffolk, especially near Thetford and Bury. Then the old village remedy for numerous ills—the elecampane (*Inula Helenium*),—puts forth its bright yellow stars in the moist pasture or hedge. This is one of the largest of our wild flowers ; and it was formerly much esteemed for its tonic properties. Its root is glutinous and aromatic ; and from it is made the candied sweetmeat,

called elecampane. The whole plant is downy, and its stem is from about two to five feet high. A good blue dye exists in its juices.

The scentless May-weed (*Matricaria inodora*) is so truly an autumnal flower, that it is little entitled to its spring-like name. In August and September, when the corn is being cut down, and after it is gleaned, the fields are full of it; and it may be commonly seen as late as December, looking, indeed, somewhat the worse for wind and weather at that season, though in August it is a pretty flower. Notwithstanding its Latin specific name, it is slightly scented, and is considered to possess some good tonic properties.

One beautiful flower, growing by the riverside in this month, is very general and very conspicuous. The tall hemp agrimony (*Eupatorium cannabinum*) is often five feet high. Its flowers grow in crowded clusters of a pale flesh colour, and are not unlike those of the garden valerian, which is sometimes seen wild also on walls. The hemp agrimony is slightly fragrant, and has been used medicinally. Indeed it is of old renown, for Mithridates, king of Pontus, first discovered its good properties.



Wild Tulip. (*Tulipa sylvestris.*)



Lily of the Valley. (*Convallaria majalis.*)





That very lovely flower, the grass of Parnassus (*Parnassia palustris*), blooms now in marshy grounds, and near streams, but, though common in Scotland, is rather a rare plant in the south. It is a large flower, of a yellowish white tint, situate on an angular stem, a few inches high, its leaves proceeding from the root on long footstalks, and heart-shaped. Its beauty may be inferred from the name with which it is honoured, and which it obtained not only because of its growing so often on hilly places, but also because it was deemed a fit flower for the muses.

One of the handsomest reed plants is now in flower, and it is common not only in England, but in almost every part of the world where streams are to be found. This is the great cat's tail, or reed-mace (*Typha latifolia*), and it is very flourishing along the borders of many ponds and lakes. Its long catkins are of a greenish brown colour, and its greyish green leaves are often an inch wide, and a yard long. The downy hairs of the reed-mace are used in stuffing pillows and mattresses, and they are a good substitute for the feathers of the bird. Its leaves, besides being eaten by cattle, are

useful for thatching cottages, and for making mats and baskets. Loudon also mentions that this is the plant which Rubens, and the later Italian painters, have represented in their pictures as the reed which was borne by the Saviour, when, in cruel mockery, it was given as a sceptre.

Another writer says of this plant, "A weaver of velvet told me that, at Spitalfields and other places, the head of this rush is used for cleaning their work in preference to a common brush. Since then, being in the neighbourhood of Blackheath, I met a man carrying a large bundle of them, and upon inquiry, he told me that they would be sold to the poor at one penny each, for the purpose of a hat-brush. I see no reason to doubt their utility in either case, for their softness and elasticity render them very applicable to these purposes." This reed is very abundant in the swamps of New Zealand, and much used by the natives for thatching roofs.

The flowers which find their places by the shores of the ocean, though never numerous, are as many as in the former months. The horned poppy (*Glaucium luteum*) yet showers down its frail yellow petals on the mass of sea-

weed. A maritime kind of southernwood (*Artemisia maritima*), or worm-seed, has green flowers; the thrift still lends its pink tufts to adorn the crevices of the rocky cliff; and the saltwort (*Salicornia herbacea*) is so general on our coast as to be known by most who visit the sea-side. The Italians call it *Erba Kali*. It was used in making glass and salted as a pickle.

The samphire (*Crithmum maritimum*) is an excellent pickle, but this flower grows only on the southern coast of England. As it flourishes on cliffs and walls near the sea, the gathering of samphire is often a dangerous occupation. Its flower is of a greenish white colour, and is in bloom during August.

Some of the little sandworts blossom now by the sea-side. They are all much alike, except one species, which is often called sea-pimpernel, or sea purslane (*Arenaria peploides*). Large patches of this plant grow on several parts of our coast. At Sheerness, in Kent, it is very abundant. It has stems, a few inches high, much branched and thickly crowded with succulent leaves. It has small white flowers, growing two or three in a cluster. The whole plant is pretty from its shining glossy appearance.

The sea-side convolvulus (*Convolvulus Soldanella*), with its pretty rose-coloured bells, flowers all the summer; and a less showy but very common plant, the sea-beet (*Beta maritima*), with its green blooms and fleshy root, is now found near the sea. It has thick wavy green leaves, which, when boiled, are a good vegetable. It is the origin of the beet of the garden (*Beta vulgaris*), which is well known as a culinary root, and as a pickle; and which is so often cut into the flowers used for ornamenting dishes. There is a great quantity of sugar both in the wild and cultivated species.

The sea oraches (*Atriplex*), and the common goosefoots (*Chenopodium*), are in this month plentiful near the sea, and are mostly in bloom. The leaves of the former are generally of a whitish green, and the plant often grows in such quantities as to present to the eye a grey green mass. The flowers are green, tinged with red, and grow in clusters of thick spikes, at the upper part of the stem. The goosefoots are very similar to these plants, and some of them are burned with the glassworts and other marine plants, for the soda yielded by their ashes. One kind is termed the good

king Henry (*Chenopodium Bonus-Henricus*), and is cultivated in Lincolnshire as spinach, and its stems as asparagus. It is quite as good in its wild as in its cultivated state.

The woodlands are now full of boughs and leaves, and the summer-flowers of last month are blooming yet. Some very pretty ferns wave their luxuriant and feathery leaves, and the mosses are thickening into a soft pathway. The rare purple helleborine (*Epipactis latifolia*) should be sought for now, and may be found in the woods of mountainous countries. Its flowers are a long lax spike, sometimes of a greenish purple, at others deep tinted as the purple grape of the vine.

The dyer's-weed (*Rubia tinctorum*, Pl. 24) yields the red dye, Madder. It is a continental plant; our English species, *R. peregrina*, also yields it. *Arnica montana* (Pl. 26) is a plant useful for bruises and sprains, a native of S. Europe. The large wax-flower (*Cerithe major*, Pl. 31), a garden plant, is a native of France. King Charles' Sceptre (Pl. 40) is a native of Sweden, *Gentiana obtusifolia* (Pl. 30), one of many European species.

## SEPTEMBER

Golden Rod—Flea-bane—Marsh Mallow—Michaelmas Daisy—  
Sea Wormwood—Mugwort—Meadow Grasses—Darnel—  
Meadow Saffron

THE September landscape is very beautiful, for though the changing tints of the leaves remind us that summer is going, yet they add to the glory and richness of the present scene. It is chiefly in remarking the flowers that we see the rapid advance of the coming winter. The flowers are now evidently lessening in number. One by one the blossoms of midsummer have disappeared; and though some, like the golden ragwort, are as bright as ever, and though others, more delicate than this, still bloom for us in some sheltered nooks, yet it would be an easy matter to count the species of flowers which open, for the first time, to the sun of September.

The tall and handsome golden rod (*Solidago virgaurea*), with its crowded clusters of flowers,





Great Wood-Rush. (*Luzula sylvatica.*)



Meadow Saffron. (*Colchicum autumnale.*)



does not unfold for the first time in this month, for it begins to bloom even as early as the end of July ; but it may be found in great perfection from now till the end of the year. It grows in woods and thickets, and is often planted in shrubberies. It was once supposed to be a cure for wounds. It was brought, in a dried state, from the woods of other lands, and sold in the London markets by the herb-women of Queen Elizabeth's days ; and, about that time, it was first discovered to grow wild in Hampstead woods. Botanists were not so numerous then as they are now ; and this must account for the fact, that a flower which grows wild in several English counties had never previously been supposed to be indigenous.

Fuller—who, in enumerating the *Worthies of England*, introduces them to his readers, by an account of the vegetable productions of their native counties—speaks very highly of the golden rod, and censures its disuse:—"Some maintain," says he, "that every county cures the diseases which it causes, and bringeth remedies for all the maladies bred therein. An opinion which, grant not true, yet may have much of truth, seeing that every county of

England especially affordeth excellent plants, were it not partly for men's laziness that they will not seek them; partly for their ignorance, that they will not know them; and partly for their pride and peevishness, that because, when they are found, they disdain to use and apply them." He adds, that while the golden rod was brought, at great expense, from foreign countries, it was highly valued: but that it was no sooner discovered to be a native plant, than it was discarded from use. Its bright yellow flowers have found for it an introduction into our gardens, and several of the species which we cultivate grow wild on the few green spots which lie about the rocky island of St. Helena.

A common flea-bane (*Pulicaria dysenterica*), a star-shaped flower, as large as a guinea, and of as bright a hue, is very frequent now on moist lands throughout England; and we may be sure, when we find this in our country walk, that some quiet river, or stream, is gliding through the landscape. This flower is commonly called wild marigold, and it received both its familiar and scientific names from the belief that its odour was repulsive to fleas, gnats, and other insects. It seems strange that it was

considered as obnoxious to insects, and worn about the person, or hung around the bed as a terror to them, while, in our days, its efficiency is totally denied. The Arabs extol this plant very highly, as a remedy for wounds. One of those traditions which a wandering people transmit from generation to generation records that this bruised flower was used by Job, as an application to those grievous diseases which he so pathetically laments. Hence the flea-bane is called by the men of the desert "Job's tears." Its stems and leaves are of a woolly texture, and of a whitish-green colour.

But directing our attention to the sandy shores, or the salt-marshes of the sea, we shall find a few autumnal flowers. The marsh mallow (*Althæa officinalis*), formerly called moorish mallow, or white mallow—is not uncommon on salt shores, either of the sea or river. The name *Althæa*, to cure, was given to it for its healing properties, which are well known, both to medical practitioners and to country people. The flowers are very pretty, of a delicate rose colour; the leaves are very thick, and both surfaces are so soft and downy that they resemble a piece of thick silky velvet.

Both leaves and root contain a great quantity of mucilage, which, in France, is made into a kind of paste, and forms the lozenges well known on the continent by the name of *Pâte de Guimauve*.

The Michaelmas-daisy, or blue chamomile (*Aster Tripolium*), though never, in our country, found on inland spots, is very frequent near the sea, or salt river. It is often called sea-starwort and blue daisy. It grows about three or four feet in height, and its lilac flowers are in bloom from August to November. Ancient writers on flowers reported of this, that it changed its colour three times a day; hence it is termed *tripolium*. The Greek writers stated, that it was white in the morning, purple at noon, and crimson in the afternoon. An old English name of this flower is hog's bean. Its root, which is long and spindle-shaped, is eagerly rooted out and eaten by swine.

The common sea wormseed (*Artemisia maritima*) is in blossom now, on salt marshes. This is not the wormwood once worn as a charm against ague. The species thus revered is that generally called mugwort (*Artemisia vulgaris*). It is a well-known plant of waste







Lords & Ladies. (*Arum maculatum*.)



Sedge. (*Carex acuta*.)

places and hedge-banks. The upper surface of its leaf is of a green as dark as that of the old ivy leaf, but it is quite white and cottony underneath.

The mugwort had, according to old writers, so powerful a spell, that the wayfaring man, who bore a branch of it about him, felt no fatigue. A species of wormwood is cultivated in some parts of Surrey for its seed, which is used by the rectifiers of British spirits; and our common mugwort is used, instead of hops, in the beer of Sweden.

And now, again, the fields are green with the after-grass, which springs up after the hay is cut down. The exquisite verdure given by the grasses to the fields—making the pastoral landscapes of England among the most lovely spots of earth—would lead us highly to value this important tribe of plants, even were they of no other use. The beneficence of the great Creator, in adorning the earth, is too little thought of. His goodness is recognized in providing us with plants for food and clothing, or shade and shelter; yet how seldom do we thank Him that He has made the meadow green, and scattered the blossoms of beauty on

every path. And yet how much real enjoyment is derived from the loveliness of the landscape! God might have provided for all our wants, and yet have placed us in a land destitute of beauty; and, surely, the profusion of the summer-flowers and the bright verdure of earth should make us not only glad, but grateful too.

In the grass tribe are included all the corn-plants, the sugar-cane, and the useful bamboo. When we consider that, in every land in which the corn-field exists, the flour procured from it constitutes the staple food of man, we form some idea of the value of this tribe; and though the South Sea Islander may live on his bread-fruit tree, and the Papuan, too idle to cultivate his land, may enjoy the produce of his native sago-palm, or the large root of some aroid; yet this food can be procured in few climates, while corn can be cultivated on the greater part of the globe.

When we see the multitude of cattle enjoying the liberal supply of food spread over the green pastures, and when "the hay appeareth, and the tender grass showeth itself, and the herbs of the mountains are gathered," we see

again, though indirectly, that the grass groweth for the service of man. When we behold how the grass, by its matted roots, binds down the sands which else would be floating far and wide, we have another instance of its value. In the Hebrides, the marram grass (*Ammophila arundinacea*) is made into ropes, and bags, and hats.

The grass oil of India is highly valued for its aromatic properties, and the fragrant scent of our native meadow grasses, when they lie withered in the sun, is delightful to the wanderer in the hay-field. The sugar-cane of the west, and the bamboo of the east, are alike valuable. The native of Asia eats the soft shoots of the bamboo as we eat asparagus. The hollow joints can make an excellent drinking cup; its seeds are eaten as a delicacy; and a decoction of its leaves furnishes him with a medicine. The large stems are used for baskets and pipes. Its leaves are made into fans and coverings for roofs; and from the plant, in various ways, are procured paper, writing-pens, furniture for houses, and every variety of domestic implements.

It is a circumstance worthy of remark, in our meadow grasses, that they possess the same properties for food as those which we cultivate

in our corn-fields. The smaller size of the seeds renders them unsuitable for culture ; or bread, and malt, might be made from seeds of the common grass. There is, indeed, a great similarity in all the plants of the grass tribe. Every one of them contains sugar, and each one has on its stem a coat of flint. After the burning of a hay-stack, lumps of silica are to be found lying on the ground around it, which the fusing properties of fire have converted from flint to this substance. The straw of barley is said, by Professor Lindley, to be melted by fire into a glass of a topaz yellow colour ; and a wheat straw is stated to furnish a colourless glass, when fused by a common blow-pipe. One grass only is deleterious. The darnel (*Lolium temulentum*), when mingled with flour, is unwholesome ; but Lindley considers that its injurious effects may have been greatly exaggerated. They are probably due to a fungus.

That singular flower, the meadow saffron (*Colchicum autumnale*), may be found both in this month and in October. It is a purple blossom, in shape resembling the common crocus. The singularity of this flower consists in its blooming in autumn, while its leaves and



fruit appear in the spring following. About the end of October the flower dies away, and no one, on looking at the plant, would observe any indication of its fruit. Yet this lies buried in the ground while winter snows are around and above it; but when the sun and showers of spring bring forward the early flowers of the meadow, the pods rise up and ripen during summer. In autumn a new corm produces the flower. The colchicum is a powerful medicine. No cattle will touch the fresh plant; and the idea that it is fatal to dogs originated its French name of *morte aux chiens*. It probably, when made into hay, loses some of its noxious property, for it is very abundant on the high lands of Italy, and is regularly cut down, on the Alpine pastures, with the summer grass. With us it grows pretty generally on the pasture-lands of the north-western counties.

This plant is probably the "rose" of Scripture, as the "Rose of Sharon"; and "the desert shall bloom like the rose." The Hebrew word means an "acid bulb." The plant is more appropriate for open spaces as the Vale of Sharon and a desert.

## OCTOBER

Signs of Autumn—Ivy—Irish Ivy—Strawberry-tree—Shepherd's  
Spikenard—Dwarf Green Weed—Crocus—Winter green  
—Mosses

THE brown October is more fertile in fruits than in flowers, and the wild nosegay gathered now is, indeed, a small one. Yet the pastoral landscape has not lost its charms, for its grass is still bright and fresh. It is not the decrease of flowers alone, however, which warns of autumn. The trees are now yellow, red, or of a withered brown, with his touches. Some, like the ash, and the great white poplar, are daily dropping so many showers of leaves, that we are anticipating that their naked branches will soon stand boldly out on the landscape. The swallows are congregating for their departure to other and warmer lands; and the loud twittering which they make on the great oak, or elm, has, to the naturalist, a sound peculiarly autumnal. All at once we miss the





Foxtail Grass. (*Alopecurus pratensis*.)

Vernal Grass. (*Anthoxanthum odoratum*.)

sound and they are gone ; and we are reminded of the allusion made by the prophet Jeremiah to the migration of birds, and the melancholy comparison which he draws between the wild bird and the instructed man. "Yea," says the prophet, "the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times ; and the crane and the swallow observe the time of their coming ; but my people know not the judgment of the Lord."<sup>1</sup> Alas ! it is not alone to ancient Israel that the reproof belongs. The voice of nature, and the voice of Providence, and the voice of God's word, are still unheard by unthinking man !

The cultivated fruits of earth are now chiefly gathered in. The corn is brought into the garner, the fragrant hops are lying in the store-house, the cherries are gathered and consumed, and the store of apples, destined for winter use, are either taken from the tree, or are ready for harvesting. But the wild berries grace the hedges by thousands, and glimmer among the rain-drops like jet and ruby mingled with crystal. The clear berries of the nightshade are outshone by the beautiful red clusters of the berries of the guelder rose, and contrast

<sup>1</sup> Jer. viii. 7.

with the deep opaque red fruits of the bryony, or the more orange-tinted bunches of the mountain ash. The scarlet haws and hips, the blackberries, the rose-tinted fruits of the spindle tree, lying open and displaying the bright orange-coloured seeds, are all plentiful now in the good greenwood; and when we consider the fruits of earth which are laid up for man, and mark the preparation of food for the fowls of heaven, may we not say with the psalmist, "Thou crownest the year with Thy goodness!"

It has been observed of our native fruits, that white berries are commonly sweet, red ones sour; blue, of a sour, mixed with a sweet flavour; and black are either almost tasteless, or poisonous. But several of our scarlet berries are poisonous too, and should never be tasted by any who do not understand their properties.

The ivy (*Hedera Helix*), which mantles over the old ruins, or climbs to the highest bough of the oak of the forest, is now displaying its clusters of green blossoms; and the bees which still venture to leave their retreats, when the morning sun shines out brightly, seem highly to prize them. The French term this plant *la lierre*, and the Spaniards give the name of *yedra*,



not only to the ivy, but to every plant which, like this, has a propensity to climb.

Sheep are very fond of ivy, and its grey-veined leaves often yield them a winter repast. The Irish ivy (*Helix vegeta*), so often cultivated under the name of the giant ivy, has very large leaves; but in other respects differs little from our wild plant.

The question, whether ivy is destructive to trees, has been much discussed by botanists, but it seems the general opinion, that it is not so. Loudon considers that the ivy is the only plant which may be reared against houses, without rendering the walls damp, and the sole objection to be raised against the picturesque covert which it affords to the house-wall is, that it harbours spiders and other insects, which will sometimes find their way into the dwelling.

That very handsome shrub, the so-called strawberry tree (*Arbutus Unedo*), is now gay with its greenish white flowers, which hang among its thick evergreen foliage like so many waxen bells. This shrub is very common in gardens, but it is rightly enumerated among our wild plants, for it has been known to grow for many centuries in the south of Ireland;

some writers, however, think that it was introduced there from Spain, by the monks of Mucross Abbey; and when we consider how many flowers and shrubs, as well as esculent vegetables, were brought into Britain, for the use of the monastery lands, this is not improbable. At the lake of Killarney, so often celebrated by the poets for its beautiful scenery, the arbutus grows in great plenty, and attains a considerable size, in the woods on the shores of the blue waters. The fruit of the tree is as large as the common hautboy, but of a much deeper crimson, and of a firmer substance; it is very ornamental to the tree, and it appears to have been a common article of food among the ancients, as it now is in Spain and Italy; yet Pliny says, the specific name of the plant is derived from *unedo*, "I eat one," because he who ate one would eat no more. Its name of arbutus is also from the Celtic words, *ar boise*, "austere bush," because of the nature of its berries; yet to many persons their flavour is agreeable. The Spaniards make of them a conserve, and the Irish peasant children gather them for sale, from the bushes of Killarney.

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Two other allies of the *Arbutus* belong to our wild plants: the trailing, or black bear-berry (*Arctostaphylos alpina*), which grows on the bleak Highland mountains, and whose foliage in autumn is remarkably beautiful, from its deep yet bright crimson colour; and the red bear-berry (*Arctostaphylos Uva-Ursi*), which is a common plant throughout the north of England, and on the Scottish Highlands. Its blossoms are of a deep rose colour; its berries smaller and more austere than those of the strawberry tree; and they afford excellent food for the moor-fowl.

The ploughman's spikenard (*Inula Conyza*) is among our latest blooming wild flowers. It has hairy leaves, and as its stem is often a yard high, it is not likely to be overlooked on the chalky or clayey pastures, where it abounds. Its radiate, or star-shaped flowers are yellow, and grow in clusters. It was, in former days, hung up in rooms to drive away gnats and other insects, and branches of it are still suspended from the cottage ceiling in the French village, for the same purpose. This plant has nothing in common with the spikenard of Scripture, an ally of our Valerian. The word is derived from "spike," an ear of barley, and "nard,"

scent; because the remains of the leaves, when withered, look like the stiff awns of barley, round the base of the stalk.

And now, when few flowers appear, we are glad to gather the second bloom of the purple violet from under its broad canopy of leaves, and to detect something like the spring odour in its flowers. That pretty bright yellow flower, with its pea-shaped blossoms, the hairy dwarf green weed (*Genista pilosa*), very generally blooms, for the second time, on the gravelly or sandy heath, during the latest months of the year. Several kinds of crocus too appear late in the autumn, and one species, the naked flowering crocus (*Crocus nudiflorus*), does not open its bright purple flowers until October, when it may be found in the meadows of some counties. How far any of the crocus tribe may be considered as truly indigenous, is a point on which botanists differ. Some writers think that they are all natives of Asia, and have been naturalized in those spots where we find them growing wild. Hooker enumerates only two doubtfully native species in his *British Flora*.

The largest of those pretty white flowers, the winter green, or pyrola, may still be gathered

from beneath the shade of the autumnal wood; for though these plants begin to bloom as early as July, they are quite vigorous till now. The species which blooms the latest is the round-leaved winter-green (*Pyrola rotundifolia*). It cannot be said of one of the winter greens that it is a common flower of England, though it is less rare in the north and in Scotland. The round-leaved species has white spreading flowers, and grows on moist copses. It is often found in Yorkshire, and, occasionally, in the Kentish woods. All the plants are exceedingly pretty, and are called winter-green from their unfading foliage. They all possess tonic properties.

And now, when flowers are few, the mosses attract the attention of the botanist, and are flourishing particularly on moist places. These minute plants are found in damp climates, in all parts of the globe, but are far more numerous in cold and temperate, than in hot regions. They are of little value in medicine, or manufactures, nor can we use them for domestic purposes. One species of the club-mosses (*Lycopodium Selago*) is used in the Isle of Skye instead of alum to fix the colour in dyeing.

Another species, the common club-moss

(*Lycopodium clavatum*), which is a large kind frequent in England, and which covers immense tracts of moss land in Lapland, is used in the manufacture of fireworks. It often grows two or three feet in length, on heathy mountainous lands, and its seeds are remarkably inflammable. It is probable that this kind will be found of more service in dyeing than has hitherto been supposed; for it has been stated by a French botanist to have the property of imparting a brilliant blue to wollen cloths, if, afterwards, they are passed through an infusion of Brazil wood.

But though no single moss is of any very great value to man, yet the mosses in general are by no means useless plants. It would reflect no dishonour on their great Creator, could we discern no service which they render to us, and no particular purpose which they answer in the economy of nature. Enough it might be to claim our grateful admiration, that their soft green substance adds to the smoothness of the grassy path; that their scaly stems, or their small leaves, forming little stars of verdure, beautify the landscape. Enough it would be that they enliven the grey stem of the old oak



tree, and furnish us with a cushioned seat at its foot. But mosses perform an important part in the vegetable kingdom. But for them, the mountainous regions would be barren indeed; for their patches of verdure cover up the seeds and roots of the Alpine flowers, and, as they decay improve the poor soils of rocks and hills. The trees are defended by them from the winter cold. The whole texture of mosses consists of cells, in which the summer shower, or the morning, or evening dew lingers, and renders the plant always moist; and thus the little moss preserves from drought the giant tree of the wood. Thousands of insects live on these plants, and hide beneath their shelter; and the bird, whose song gladdens the summer wood, gathers the moss for his nest. The bog and morass are gradually filled up, and in some instances become firm land by the growth and decomposition of mosses. They and the lichens are the first vegetation which spring up on the thin soil of rocks or islands, from which the sea has withdrawn; and the farthest and dreariest spot of earth which the foot of man has traversed was found decked with some of the moss plants. When mosses have ceased,

vegetation is at an end, and the the snows dwell perpetually on the high mountains, or northernmost point of land. About eight hundred kinds of moss have been discovered, and small as they are, each species has distinct characters, by which all the plants composing it may be recognized. No confusion exists in nature, and when the marks of one moss are clearly defined, the botanist may discover them in every plant of the species, whether he find it on a rock of England, or on some hill distant from our country by thousands of miles. We must look at them through a microscope, to see their full beauty. Unlike the works of man, the works of God are always perfect, and most admirable when most examined. The finest cambrics, when seen through a magnifying power, will be discovered to have specks, and flaws, and uneven threads; but the smallest moss will be found full of symmetry and beauty.

There is something inexplicable in the growth of mosses and lichens on newly-formed soils. We can comprehend how the seeds of plants may have reached the summit of the highest ruin, but how can we account for them on new islands, where little specks of moss are seen

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struggling into existence, on barren and lifeless soils? Their spores were never planted there by man; the waters cannot have borne thither these minute particles, for so much moisture would have destroyed the vital power of the seeds; the birds of the air can hardly have carried them so far; one would think they had lain in the earth since the creation, and were now bursting into light from their long night of darkness: it is mystery, all! But He who made the earth, and the dews which water it, has planted them there, and daily vivifies them with His fresh airs, and the showers of Heaven. And while we see how unable we are to comprehend these His works, shall we wonder that some of the great mysteries of spiritual truth should be incomprehensible to finite minds; and if a little moss on a rock can suffice to make us feel our ignorance, need we, on the sublime things of the kingdom of heaven, hesitate to say with Job, "Lo, these are parts of His ways: but how little a portion is heard of Him!"<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Job xxvi. 14.

## NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER

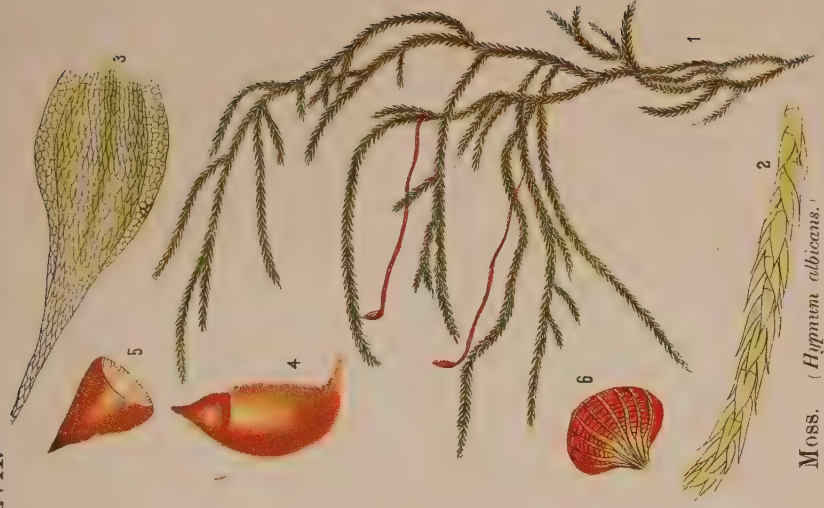
Signs of coming Winter—Leafless Woods—Mushrooms—Fungus  
Tribe

WE may even yet cull a good nosegay from the garden, but our fields and lanes put forth no new blossoms for the dreary November, or the frosty airs of the closing month; not that the country is absolutely destitute of flowers, for a few autumnal blossoms, as the ragwort, are yet left; and the winter flowering furze is bright; and the pale yarrow still stays with us; and the starry daisy yet sparkles in the grass. Not only, in our rural walk, do we miss the many flowers, but the voice of the tuneful bird now rarely bids us pause to listen. The robin, however, that "household bird, with the red stomacher," sings every day more regularly, and with louder note; the sky-lark warbles a parting song, and



Lichen.

(*Cladonia coccifera*.)



Moss. (*Hypnum albicans*.)





the thrush has not yet forsaken the almost leafless woods, but on a bright frosty morning will cheer us with a song, as loud and sweet as even the strains of summer. The countryman finds employment in tending his farm; but the field labour is little now, for the Almighty "saith to the snow, Be thou on the earth; likewise to the small rain, and to the great rain of His strength. He sealet up the hand of every man; that all men may know His work."<sup>1</sup>

The mushroom, or fungus tribe, with their leathery, or spongy textures, are some of them common on the decayed tree, or putrid substance. Some are of a grey green, others of lemon or orange colour, or red, or spotted with chocolate-coloured spots, and bright mulberry-coloured stains. Though several are poisonous, yet many are beautiful, and display, by their great variety, the Almighty skill.

Spring, and summer, and autumn, with their flowers, and fruits and leaves, pass rapidly away. Other springs shall arise, but which of us can tell that we shall mark its flowers; the voice of the changing seasons is, to us, the voice of

<sup>1</sup> Job xxxvii. 6, 7.

God; and well may the prayer of the psalmist suit us all, "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Psa. xv. 12.

## APPENDIX<sup>1</sup>

### PLATE 1

#### Traveller's Joy (*Clematis Vitalba*)

1. Flowering branch; 2. Stamen; 3. Carpel; 4. Head of ripe fruits (tailed achenes); 5. Ripe ovary; 6. Transverse section, showing the white endosperm in which the embryo lies.

N.B.—The four sepals are cream-white; the corolla is wanting.

#### Pasque Flower (*Anemone Pulsatilla*)

1. Entire plant; 2. Leaf; 3. Portion of leaf, upper side; 4. Ditto, underside; 5. Stamens; 6. Carpel.

N.B.—The plant has leaf-scales above the root; an involucre of three silky bracts; the calyx is purple, and the corolla is wanting.

### PLATE 2

#### Buttercup (*Ranunculus auricomus*)

1. Entire plant; 2. Leaf; 3. Flower, natural size; 4, 5. Petals; 6. Calyx.

#### Monkshood (*Aconitum Napellus*)

1. Flowering stem; 2. Root-stock; 3. Flower dissected, with five unequal sepals and two crozier-like

<sup>1</sup> The plates are arranged in the same sequence of families, as in Hooker's *Students' Flora of the British Islands*.

petals with honey-bearing nectaries; 4. Fruit of three separate carpels; 5. Single carpel bursting, with seeds at the base; 6. Ripe seed.

### PLATE 3

#### Baneberry (*Actæa spicata*)

1. Flowering stem; 2. Bud; 3. White sepal; 4. Flower expanded, petals wanting; 5. Petal; 6. Stamen enlarged; 7. Four petals and pistil; 8. Pistil; 9. Berry; 10. Transverse section of berry; 11. Skin removed showing two rows of seeds; 12. Seeds in section; 13. Seed in section enlarged, showing the minute embryo in endosperm.

#### Barrenwort (*Epimedium alpinum*)

1. Entire plant; 2. Flower, natural size; 3. Ditto enlarged; 4. Flower from below, showing the four sepals and four outer petals; 5, 6. Petals; 7. Four nectariferous petals; 9. Stamen, with valvular anthers, one uplifted; 10. Pistil.

### PLATE 4

#### White Water-lily (*Nymphæa alba*)

1. Flower; 2. Leaf; 3, 4. Three stamens showing transitions between a petal and a stamen; 5. Seed, natural size and enlarged, within net-like skin; berry and seeds without the skin.

#### Corn or Red Poppy (*Papaver Rhœas*)

1. Flowering plant; 2. Petal; 3. Bud opening and shedding the two sepals; 4. Stamens and pistil; 5. Stamen; 6. Pistil; 7. Ditto, showing the sessile, rayed

stigma; 8. Capsule cut across; 9. Seeds, natural size; 10. Seed enlarged.

## PLATE 5

**Fumitory** (*Fumaria officinalis*)

1. Flowering branch; 2. Leaves; 3. Flower; 4. Sepal enlarged; 5. Unripe, and 6. Ripe fruit; 7. Seed; 8. Small variety of Fumitory; 9. Leaf; 10. Flower; 11. Sepal enlarged; 12. Fruit.

**White Mustard** (*Brassica alba*)

1. Flowering stem; 2. Leaf; 3. Flower seen from above; 4. Ditto from below; 5. Petal; 6. Flower, corolla removed; 7. Ditto enlarged; 8, 9. Stamens; 10, 11. Pistil; 12. Siliqua; 13. Part covering a seed; 14. Ripe siliqua; 15. Ditto dehiscing; 16, 17. Seeds, natural size and enlarged.

## PLATE 6

**Woad** (*Isatis tinctoria*)

1. Flowering plant; 2. Flower, natural size; 3, 4. Ditto enlarged; 5. Calyx, natural size; 7, 8. Ripe siliqua, entire and dehiscing; 9. Ditto cross-section; 10. Ditto vertical section; 11, 12. Seed, natural size and enlarged.

**Sweet Violet** (*Viola odorata*)

1. Flowering plant; 2. Flower; 3. Stalk with two bracts below, and calyx; 5, 6. Pistil; 7. Stamen from inner side, showing anther-cells below and appendage above; 8. Stamen, side view, showing honey-secreting appendage; 9. Capsule and calyx; 10. Ditto bursting; 11, 12. Seed, natural size and enlarged.

## PLATE 7

**Heartsease or Pansy** (*Viola tricolor*)

1. Flowering plant; 2. Flower; 3. Calyx; 4. Calyx and capsule; 5, 6. Seed, natural size and enlarged.

**Waterwort** (*Elatine triandra*)

1. Plant, natural size; 2. A shoot enlarged; 3. Flower, natural size; 4. Ditto enlarged; 5, 6. Capsule, natural size and enlarged; 7. Seed enlarged.

## PLATE 8

**Carthusian Pink** (*Dianthus Carthusianorum*)

1. Flowering plant; 2. Portion of stem with a pair of opposite leaves; 3. Tip of a leaf; 4. Flower; 5. Petal; 6. Capsule bursting, with bracts at the base; 7. Stamens; 8. Ditto enlarged, showing back and front view; 9. Pistil of two carpels; 10. Stalk with a leaf, bracts, and bursting capsule; 11. Ditto, bracts removed; 12, 13. Seeds, natural size and enlarged.

**Soapwort** (*Saponaria officinalis*)

1. Flowering plant; 2. Flower; 3. Petal with long claw; 4. Petal with a stamen; 5. Calyx; 6. Ten stamens; 7, 8. Capsule; 9. Ditto cut vertically, showing seeds; 10, 11. Seeds, natural size and enlarged.

## PLATE 9

**Corn-Cockle** (*Githago segetum*)

1. Flowering plant; 2. Flower; 3. Calyx; 4. Petal with stamen; 5. Stamens and pistil; 6. Fruit within



the calyx; 7. Ripe capsule; 8. Vertical section, showing free central placenta; 9, 10. Seeds, natural size and enlarged.

**St. John's Wort** (*Hypericum perforatum*)

1. Flowering plant; 2. Portion of stem, showing the two wings; 3. Leaf; 4. Flower; 5. Pistils; 6. Style and stigma; 7. Stamen from one of the three phalanges; 8. Pistil and calyx; 9. Fruit; 10. Capsule cut across; 11, 12. Seed, enlarged and natural size; 13. Seed cut across.

PLATE 10

**Mountain Geranium** (*Geranium pyrenaicum*)

1. Flowering plant; 2. Flower enlarged; 3. Calyx; 4. Apex of a sepal with gland; 5. Stamens in two whorls; 6. Pistil; 7, 8. Capsule with calyx, enlarged and natural size; 9. Seed enlarged.

**Procumbent Oxalis** (*Oxalis corniculata*)

1. Flowering and fruiting plant; 2. Flower; 3. Calyx; 4. Stamen in two whorls; 5. Pistil of five carpels; 6. Capsule; 7. Seed, natural size; 8. Ditto with elastic coat; 9. Seed enlarged, the coat removed.

PLATE 11

**Common Flax** (*Linum usitatissimum*)

1. Flowering plant; 2, 3. Flower, natural size; 4. Calyx; 5. Stamens and pistil; 6. Five stamens, united at the base, with staminodes; 8. Pistil with five free styles; 9. Capsule with calyx; 10. Seed enlarged; 11. Capsule open, showing the ten seeds; 12. Seeds, natural size.

**Spindle-tree** (*Euonymus europæus*)

1. Flowering branch; 2. Flower seen from above, natural size; 3. Ditto from below, enlarged; 4. Ditto, natural size, without corolla; 5. Ditto enlarged, both from below; 6. Four honey-glands and pistil; 7. Style and stigma; 8. Stamen; 9. Fruit, natural size; 10. Ditto opening; 11. Red seed with an orange-coloured aril.

## PLATE 12

**Alpine Buckthorn** (*Rhamnus alpina*)

1. Flowering branch with male flowers; 2. Leaf-margin; 3. Male flower, natural size; 4. Ditto enlarged; 5. Ditto seen from below; 6. Female flower; 7. Berry.

**Bean-bush** (*Cytisus capitatus*)

1. Flowering branch; 2. Flower; 3. Ripe pod with calyx; 4. Seed.

## PLATE 13

**Meadow Clover** (*Trifolium medium*)

1. Flowering plant; 2. Leaf; 3. Leaflet; 4. Flower; 5. Calyx; 6. Ditto, natural size; 7. Ditto withered and enlarged; 8. Pistil; 9. Ditto enlarged, cut open; 10. Seed, natural size; 11. Ditto enlarged; 12. Seed cut across, showing embryo in section.

**Crimson Clover** (*Trifolium incarnatum*)

1. Flowering plant; 2. Head of flowers; 3. Flower; 4. Calyx; 5. Standard petal; 6. Wings, keel petals, and pistil; 7. Stipules; 8. Leaf.

## PLATE 14

**Kidney Vetch or Lady's Finger** (*Anthyllis Vulneraria*)

1. Flowering plant; 2. Flower; 3. Standard; 4. Wing petals; 5. Keel petals.

**Tufted Vetch** (*Vicia Cracca*)

1. Flowering branch; 2. Stem, portion enlarged; 3. Stipules; 4. Leaflet; 5, 6. Flowers; 7. Standard; 8, 9. Wings and 10. keel petals; 11. Stamens, nine filaments coherent and one free; 12. Calyx; 13. Pod; 14. Seeds.

## PLATE 15

**Blackthorn or Sloe** (*Prunus spinosa*)

1. Flowering branch; 2. Fruiting branch; fruit on spines; 3, 4. Flowers, natural size and enlarged; 5. Calyx and pistil protruding from the receptacular tube; 6. Petal; 7. Stamen enlarged; 8. Pistil enlarged; 9. Fruit (a drupe); 10. Ditto in section, showing stone or inner lining (endocarp), within the fleshy mesocarp.

**Spring Cinque-foil** (*Potentilla verna*)

1. Flowering plant; 2. Flower seen from above; 3. Ditto seen from below, showing five sepals with epicalyx.

## PLATE 16

**Wild Strawberry** (*Fragaria vesca*)

1. Flowering plant; 2, 3. Flowers seen from below and above; 4. Flower enlarged, with ten petals; 5, 6. Stamen, natural size and enlarged; 7. Ripe fruit with achenes; 8 and 9. Achenes, natural size and enlarged.

**Cloudberry** (*Rubus Chamæmorus*)

1. Flowering shoot; 2. Stamen; 3. Flower; 4. Carpel; 5. Fruit of drupels, with calyx.

## PLATE 17

**Dog-Rose** (*Rosa canina*)

1. Flowering shoot; 2. Flower with petals removed; 3. Stamen; 4. Section of the receptacular tube, showing many distinct carpels; 5. Carpel; 6. Portion of stem with thorns; 7. Ripe fruit or hep; 8. Ditto vertical section showing achenes; 9. Achenes without the styles.

**Service-tree** (*Sorbus domestica*)

1. Flowering shoot; 2. Flower; 3. Ripe fruit, a pome; 4. Ditto cross section; 5. Petal; 6. Seed; 7. Portion of stem showing two stipules and base of leaf; at the base, with a fruiting branch.

## PLATE 18

**Water Purslane** (*Peplis Portula*)

1. Flowering and rooting shoot; 2. Calyx; 3. Ditto without a corolla; 4. Stamen; 5. Pistil; 6. Fruit within the calyx; 7. Ditto enlarged; 8. Ditto cross section; 9, 10. Seeds, natural size and enlarged.

**Rosemary Willow-herb** (*Epilobium Dodonæi*)

1. Flowering shoot; 2. Leaf; 3. Flower; 4. Pistil; 5. Ripe pod.

## PLATE 19

**Evening Primrose** (*Oenothera biennis*)

1. Flowering shoot; 2. Flower; 3. Petal; 4.

Stamen ; 5. Receptacular-tube in section above, showing style and stigmas, the ovary being "inferior" ; 6. Bursting fruit ; 7. Cross-section of fruit ; 8, 9. Seeds, natural size and enlarged ; 10. Fruit with withered sepals above ; 11. Ripe fruit.

**Horn-nut** (*Trapa natans*)

1. Portion of flowering plant, showing dissected submerged, and complete floating leaves with inflated petioles ; 2, 3. Flower ; 4. Calyx : 5. Style, honey-disk, and one stamen ; 6, 7. Stamens, front and back views ; 8. Ripe fruit ; 9. Sepal-tip from summit of fruit ; 10. Fruit cut vertically showing embryo (which has only one perfect cotyledon, the other remaining rudimentary).

PLATE 20

**Mare's-tail** (*Hippuris vulgaris*)

1. Flowering plant ; 2. Portion of stem showing a whorl of leaves ; 3. Flower (with one stamen only) ; 4. The stamen ; 5, 6. Pistil, natural size and enlarged ; 7. Fruit, cut vertically ; 8. Ditto transversely ; 9. Seed.

**Red Bryony** (*Bryonia dioica*)

1. Flowering branch ; 2. Tendril, natural size ; 3, 4, 5. Female flowers ; 6. Calyx of, and 7, 8. Male flowers ; 9, 10. Sinuate anthers ; 11. Ripe berries ; 12. Ditto cut across ; 13, 14, 15. Seed, entire and in sections showing embryo without endosperm.

PLATE 21

**Gooseberry** (*Ribes Grossularia*, var. *Uva-crispa*)

1. Flowering branch ; 2. Section of receptacular tube, with sepals (reflexed), petals, and stamens ; 3.

Pistil; 4. Portion of branch with fruit, showing the spiny cushion (*pulvinus*) at the base of the leaf stalk; 5. Seeds.

**Mountain Currant** (*Ribes alpinum*)

1. Flowering branch; 2. Raceme of flowers, natural size; 3. Flower enlarged; 4. Ditto showing globular inferior ovary, and bract; 5. Fruiting shoot; 6. Fruit; 7. Seed.

PLATE 22

**Hare's-ear** (*Bupleurum rotundifolium*)

1. Flowering shoot; 2, 3. Flower, natural size and enlarged; 4. Fruit (*cremocarp*); 5. Seeds.

**Coriander** (*Coriandrum sativum*)

1. Flowering plant; 2. Umbel of flowers; 3. Peduncles and pedicils of umbel; 4, 5, 9. Inferior ovary, superior sepals; 6. Irregular corolla; 7. Flower showing irregular corolla of five unequal petals; 8. Cleft petal and stamen; 10, 11. Incurved petals, and stamens; 12, 13. Fruit (*cremocarp*); 14. Ditto in section; 15, 16. Mericarps, seen without and within.

PLATE 23

**Dogwood** (*Cornus sanguinea*)

1. Flowering branch; 2. Flower; 3. Inferior ovary and calyx, seen from below; 4. Pistil; 5. Stamen; 6. Ripe fruit; 7. Seed.

**Mistletoe** (*Viscum album*)

1. Flowering branch; 2. Leaf and flower-buds; 3, 4. Flowers (female); 5. Male flower, natural size; 6.



Ditto enlarged; 7. Ripe berries; 8. Section of berry; 9. Seed.

## PLATE 24

**Dyer's Madder** (*Rubia tinctorum*)

1. Flowering stem; 2. Rhizome with roots; 3, 4, and 5, 6. Four and five petalled flowers, natural size and enlarged; 7. Calyx on inferior ovary; 8, 9. Stamens natural size and enlarged; 10, 11. Pistil, ditto; 11. Ovary beginning to enlarge; 12. Unripe and ripe berry.

**Valerian** (*Valeriana officinalis*)

1. Flowering plant; 2. Corymb of flowers, natural size; 3. Flower; 4, 5. Opening buds; 6. Corolla laid open with the three stamens; 7, 8. Pistil, with rolled-up pappus; 9, 10. Fruit with unrolled plumose pappus, natural size and enlarged.

## PLATE 25

**Colt's-foot** (*Tussilago Farfara*)

1. Flowering plant, with leaf-scales, leaves not yet developed; 2. Plant with leaves; 3, 4. Ray-florets, female; 5, 6. Disk-florets, male (note the club-like, abortive stigma in 6); 7, 8. Fruit with pappus, natural size and enlarged.

**Ox-eye Daisy** (*Chrysanthemum Leucanthemum*)

1. Flowering plant; 2. Head of florets; 3. Involucre of bracts; 4. Ray-floret (female); 5, 6. Disk-florets, hermaphrodite; 7. Same, corolla removed; 8, 9. Fruit, natural size and enlarged; 10. Head of fruits.

## PLATE 26

**Arnica** (*Arnica montana*)

1. Flowering plant; 2. Involucre of bracts, seen from below; 3, 6. Floret (female) of the ray; 4, 5. Pitted disk, each pit containing a disk floret (hermaphrodite); 7, 8, 9. Fruit with hair-like, pilose pappus; 10. Fruit enlarged; 11. Ditto without the pappus.

**Giant Bell-flower** (*Campanula latifolia*)

1. Flowering stem; 2. Lower leaf; 3. Upper leaf; 4. Margin of leaf; 5. Flower; 6. Calyx with inferior ovary; 7. Stamen with curved filament; 8. Style and stigmas with circular honey-gland at the base.

## PLATE 27

**Flesh-coloured Heath** (*Erica herbacea*)

1. Flowering branch; 2. Flower; 3. Portion of stem with leaves and a flower; 4. Calyx; 5. Corolla laid open; 6, 7. Stamens, showing the pores of the anthers.

**Bog-Whortleberry** (*Vaccinium uliginosum*)

1. Flowering branch; 2. Flower; 3. Calyx with pistil; 4. Anthers with tails and opening by pores; 5. Stamen, back view; 6. Half-ripe ovary; 7. Ripe fruits; 8. Cross-section of fruit; 9. Seed.

## PLATE 28

**Common Winter-green** (*Pyrola minor*)

1. Flowering plant; 2. Flower; 3. Calyx and pistil; 4. Calyx, enlarged; 5. Flower enlarged, petals falling, separately; 6, 7. Stamens, showing anthers

with pores ; 8, 9. Pistil, natural size and enlarged ; 10. Fruit ; 11, 12. Seed, natural size and enlarged.

**Yellow Bird's-nest** (*Monotropa Hypopitys*)

1. Flowering plant ; 2, 3. Five- and four-merous flowers ; 4, 5. Petals ; 6. Stamens and pistil ; 7. Pistil and two stamens, enlarged ; 8, 9. Four- and five-celled ovaries ; 10. Pistil with withered petals ; 11. Ripening ovary ; 12. Fruit cut transversely, showing five cells with seeds ; 13, 14. Seeds, natural size and enlarged.

PLATE 29

**Holly** (*Ilex Aquifolium*)

1. Flowering branch ; 2. Calyx ; 3. Flower ; 4, 5. Petal, natural size and enlarged ; 6, 7. Ovary, natural size and enlarged ; 8. Ripe berries ; 9. Berry cut across, showing seeds ; 10, 11. Seeds.

**Ash** (*Fraxinus excelsior*)

1. Fruiting shoot ; 2. Male-flowering shoot ; 3. Flower (male) consisting of two stamens only ; 4. Flower (hermaphrodite) consisting only of two stamens and a pistil ; 5. Winged fruit (samara), cut open to show the seed ; 6. Half a seed with the long funicle attached ; 7. Female flowering shoot, pistils, half ripe.

PLATE 30

**Centaury** (*Erythræa Centaurium*)

1. Flowering plant ; 2, 3. Flowers ; 4, 5. Calyx, natural size and enlarged ; 6. Corolla laid open ; 7. Stamen with spirally twisted bursting anther ; 8, 9.

Pistil, natural size and enlarged ; 10. Flowers withering ; 11. Capsule ; 12, 13. Seeds, natural size and enlarged.

**Obtuse-leaved Gentian** (*Gentiana obtusifolia*)

1. Flowering plant ; 2. Calyx ; 3. Corolla with hairs on inner surface.

PLATE 31

**Greater Dodder** (*Cuscuta europæa*)

1. Flowering plant, parasitic ; 2, 3. Five- and four-merous flowers ; 4, 5. Ditto Calyx ; 6. Ditto enlarged ; 7, 8. Four-merous and five-merous corollas with stamens, laid open ; 9, 10. Pistil, natural size and enlarged ; 11. Fruit ; 12, 13. Closed and open fruit (circumscissile dehiscence) ; 14. Seeds.

**Large Wax-Flower** (*Cerithe major*)

1. Flowering plant ; 2. Flower and leaves ; 3. Corolla with five stamens, laid open ; 4, 7. Sepals enlarged in fruit ; 5. Pistil ; 6. Stamen ; 8. Nutlets.

PLATE 32

**Borage** (*Borago officinalis*)

1. Flowering plant ; 2. Flower ; 3. Diagram of flower ; 5, 6. Stamen with dorsal appendage, natural size and enlarged ; 7, 8. Pistil, natural size and enlarged ; 9. Calyx, enclosing nutlets, enlarged ; 10, 11. Nutlet, natural size and enlarged ; 12. Calyx, back view.

**Forget-me-not** (*Myosotis palustris*)

1. Flowering plant ; 2, 3, 4. Flowers ; 5. Diagram

of corolla and stamens ; 6, 7. Stamens ; 8. Calyx ; 9. Ditto enlarged ; 10. Part of calyx with the pistil ; 11. Site of hairs on the calyx-edge ; 12. Pistil ; 13. Seed, natural size ; 14, 15, 16. Ditto enlarged.

## PLATE 33

**Woody Nightshade or Bittersweet** (*Solanum Dulcamara*)

1. Flowering and fruiting branch ; 2. Leaf ; 3. Flower ; 4, 5. Calyx, natural size and enlarged ; 6, 7. Pistil, Ditto ; 8. Berry ; 9. Ditto cut across ; 10. Seeds ; 11. Ditto enlarged.

**Deadly Nightshade** (*Atropa Belladonna*)

1. Flowering branch ; 2. Corolla, laid open ; 3. Calyx and pistil ; 4. Calyx and berry, cut across, showing the two cells and seeds.

## PLATE 34

**Henbane** (*Hyoscyamus niger*)

1. Flowering plant ; 2. Flower ; 3. Calyx ; 4. Stamen ; 5. Pistil ; 6. Capsule within the enlarged calyx ; 7. Capsule ; 8. Ditto dehiscing in a circumscissile manner ; 9. Section of ovary, showing dumb-bell-like placentas ; 10. Seed.

**Foxglove** (*Digitalis purpurea*)

1. Flowering plant ; 2. Flower ; 3. Corolla laid open ; 4. Stamen ; 5. Pistil ; 6. Calyx ; 7. Calyx and burst capsule ; 8. Half of burst capsule ; 9. Seeds, natural size ; 10. Ditto enlarged ; 11. Ditto cut open to show the embryo in endosperm.

## PLATE 35

**King Charles' Sceptre** (*Pedicularis Sceptrum Carolinum*)

1. Flowering plant; 2. Calyx.

**Sage** (*Salvia officinalis*)

1. Flowering stem; 2. Flower; 3. Calyx; 4. Corolla laid open; 5. Two stamens, each with a polleniferous anther-cell above and a barren one below; 6. Upper lip (hood) with the two upturned abortive anther cells; 7, 8. Pistil, natural size and enlarged; 9. Calyx with nutlets; 10. Ripe nutlets; 11. Single nutlet.

## . PLATE 36

**Common Calamint** (*Calamintha officinalis*)

1. Flowering stem; 2. Leaf; 3. Flower; 4. Corolla, enlarged; 5. Calyx, enlarged; 6. Nutlets; 7. Ditto enlarged.

**Hemp Nettle** (*Galeopsis pubescens*)

1. Flowering stem; 2. Leaf; 3. Flower; 4. Corolla and stamens; 5. Tip of a lobe of the hood; 6, 7. A variety; 8. Nutlets; 9-11. Calyx; 12, 13. Nutlets; 14. Calyx with nutlets; 15. Nutlets; 16. Ditto enlarged ripe.

## PLATE 37

**Upright Woundwort** (*Stachys recta*)

1. Flowering stem; 2. Leaf; 3. Foliaceous bract; 4, 5. Flower; 6. Diagram, 7, 8. Corolla laid open to show the stamens; 9, 10. Seeds enlarged and natural size.

**Vervain** (*Verbena officinalis*)

1. Flowering plant; 2. Flowering spike; 3, 4.



Calyx, natural size and enlarged; 5, 6. Flower; 7. Ditto laid open; 8, 9. Pistil, natural size and enlarged; 10, 11. Fruit, Ditto; 12, 13. Seed, Ditto.

## PLATE 38

Greater Bladderwort (*Utricularia vulgaris*)

1. Flowering plant, with submerged, dissected leaves and traps for catching animalculæ; 2. Fragment of leaf with globular trap; 3, 4. Front and back view of flower; 5. Calyx; 6. Corolla opened, showing curved stamens; 7, 8. Front and back view of pistil; 9. Curved stamen; 10. Capsule; 11. Capsule burst and leaving seeds; 12. Seed.

Cowslip (*Primula veris*)

1. Flowering plant; 2. Flower; 3. Calyx; 4. Corolla laid open; 5. Stamen; 6, 7. Pistil; 8. Ovary ripening; 9. Capsule dehiscing by recurved teeth; 10. Seeds.

## PLATE 39

Sow-bread (*Cyclamen europæum*)

1. Flowering plant, with large corm; 2. Corolla; 3. Ripe capsule with spiral stalk; 4. Capsule burst, showing free-central placenta; 5. Seeds.

Upright Globularia (*Globularia vulgaris*)

1. Flowering plant; 2. Head of flowers; 3. Involucre of bracts; 4, 5. Flower, natural size and enlarged; 6. Corolla cut open; 7. Calyx; 8. Bract.

## PLATE 40

Hoary Plantain or Lamb's Tongue (*Plantago media*)

1. Flowering plant; 2. Flowering spike; 3, 4. Flower, natural size and enlarged; 5. Calyx; 6, 7.

Pistil ripening, corolla withering over it; 8, 9. Ripe capsule, natural size and enlarged; 10, 11. Sections of capsule; 12-15. Seeds, natural size and enlarged.

**Perennial Goosefoot** (*Chenopodium Bonus Henricus*)

1. Flowering shoot; 2. Ditto enlarged; 3-5. Flowers with two, three, and five stamens; 6, 7. Seeds, natural size and enlarged.

PLATE 41

**Purple Willow** (*Salix purpurea*)

1. Male flowering shoot; 2. Bud; 3. Bud-scale; 4. Scale with male bud; 5. Male catkin; 6. Bract with stamen; 7. Female catkin; 8, 9. Scale with pistil; 10. Fruiting catkin; 11. Shoot with leaf-buds; 12. Ditto expanding; 13. Shoot with two leaves.

**Alder** (*Alnus glutinosa*)

1. Shoot with leaves and stipules; 2. Young male catkin; 3. Shoot with male and female catkins; 4, 5, 6, 7. Different views of male flowers; 8. Female catkin; 9, 10. Two female flowers with scale; 11. Young, and 12 ripening catkin; 13, 14. Scale with fruit (nut); 15, 16. Fruit; 17, 18. Sections of nut.

PLATE 42

**Flag** (*Iris germanica*)

1. Flowering stem; 2. Leafy base with section of the rhizome; 3. Inner leaf of the perianth; 4. Petaloid style and stigma with a stamen; 5. Ditto back view.

**Lady's Slipper** (*Cypripedium Calceolus*)

1. Flowering plant; 2. Leaf with flower (the yellow

lip not represented); 4. Anther, ovary, cut across, and gynophore (perianth removed); 5. Stigmas, from inner side; 6. Anther; 7. Capsule with withered perianth; 8. Ditto in section; 9, 10. Seeds, natural size and enlarged; 11. Lip.

## PLATE 43

Wild Tulip (*Tulipa sylvestris*)

1. Flowering plant; 2. Bulb, in section; 3. Flower; 4, 5. Leaves of the perianth; 6. Stamens; 7. Two stamens and pistil; 8. Capsule dehiscing; 9, 10. Sections of seeds, showing the embryo in endosperm.

Lily of the Valley (*Convallaria majalis*)

1. Entire flowering plant; 2. Flower with bract; 3. Flower, laid open; 4. Pistil; 5. Stamen; 6. Ripe berry; 7, 8. Ditto sections showing cells and seeds; 9. Seeds.

## PLATE 44

Great Wood-Rush (*Luzula sylvatica*)

1. Flowering plant; 2. Jointed stem; 3. Flowering top, natural size; 4, 5. Perianth with fruit; 6. Perianth without the fruit,

Meadow Saffron (*Colchicum autumnale*)

1. Flowering plant without leaves; 2. Leafing plant with fruit; 3. Stamen; 4, 5. Seed, natural size and enlarged; 6. Section of capsule; 7. Ditto entire.

## PLATE 45

Sedge (*Carex acuta*)

1. Flowering plant; 2. Flowering stem; 3. Male spike; 4. Male flower (glume with three stamens); 5.

Portion of stem with female catkin; 6. Female flower (glume with pistil); 7. Glume with urceolus investing the ovary; 8. Urceolus; 9. Ditto transverse section; 10. Grain; 11. Section of the grain.

**Lords and Ladies** (*Arum maculatum*)

1. Flowering plant; 2. Spadix; 3. Abortive carpels, below the purple appendix; 4. Stamen with four anther cells; 5. Pistil; 6. Ripe berries; 7. Berry in section; 8. Seed; 9. Ditto enlarged.

PLATE 46

**Vernal Grass** (*Anthoxanthum odoratum*)

1. Flowering plant; 2. Spike, natural size; 3. Flower; 4. Outer glumes; 5. Spikelet enlarged; 6. Inner, awned glumes; 7. Stamens and pistil; 8, 9. Grain, unripe; 10, 11. Ditto ripe, natural size and enlarged.

**Fox-tail Grass** (*Alopecurus pratensis*)

1. Flowering plant; 2. Spike, natural size; 3. Spikelet; 4, 5. Flower; 6. Glumes; 7. Outer glumes; 8. Inner glume, awned; 9. Stamens and pistil; 10. Flowering glume and stamens.

PLATE 47

**Moss** (*Hypnum albicans*)

1. Plant natural size; 2. Shoot enlarged; 3. Leaf, much magnified; 4. Capsule; 5. Calyptra; 6. Peristome.

**Lichen** (*Cladonia coccifera*)

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